



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>







NBO
GARDINER









ل

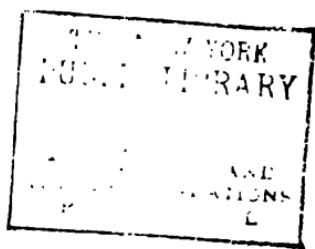
ج





Vacation Incidents.







...DON'T GO, OLD CHAP, STAY AND TELL US MORE
ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW WE CAN'T ALL BE THE CON-
DUCTOR.***

A Personally Conducted Tour. Page 77.

VACATION INCIDENTS

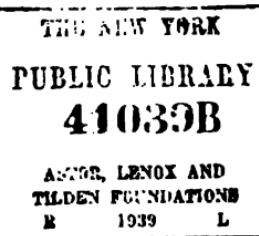
BY

A. PAUL GARDINER

Author of "A Drummer's Parlor Stories,"
"Paul's Adventures,"
"The Fifth Avenue Social Trust," etc.

ILLUSTRATED.

A. P. GARDINER,
New York.
1899.



COPYRIGHT, 1899, BY
A. P. GARDINER.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
TOO MUCH REPUTATION, - - - - -	13
TOO MUCH MANNERS, - - - - -	33
NED'S CONFIDENCE, - - - - -	51
A PERSONALLY CONDUCTED TOUR, - - - - -	67
O'REILLY AT THE CAKE-WALK, - - - - -	101
THE LARCHMONT COMMUTERS.	
CHAP. I. THE SCHEME IS LAID, - - - - -	129
CHAP. II. THE RIDE TO LARCHMONT, - - - - -	135
CHAP. III. THE BICYCLE RIDE, - - - - -	145
CHAP. IV. PERSONALITIES, - - - - -	149
CHAP. V. ANDY CHAPERONES THE DINNER PARTY, - - - - -	156
CHAP. VI. AN IMPROMPTU SAIL, - - - - -	167
CHAP. VII. CHOOSING THE ROOMS, - - - - -	176
CHAP. VIII. AT HOME—OVER THE LAUNDRY, -	183
CHAP. IX. ONE WEEK AT THE O. T. L. ROOMS, - - - - -	191
CHAP. X. RIGHT AFTER DINNER, - - - - -	203
CHAP. XI. LATE IN THE NIGHT, - - - - -	209
CHAP. XII. ONE DAY MORE AT THE O. T. L. ROOMS, - - - - -	215
CHAP. XIII. SO THEY TALKED IT OVER, - -	220

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	TO FACE PAGE
FRONTISPICE	
“Don’t go, old chap, stay and tell us more about it. You know we can’t all be The Conductor.”	
“The old professor * * * stopped and in- quired how the world fared with us,”	21
“He was calmly told that he was in the wrong place,”	28
“With a withering indifference to his presence, the bewitching golf-player swept past us,”	40
“As they clasped hands, each burst into a ringing laugh,”	47
“They were strolling in the moonlight,”	51
“Overlooking the Long Island Sound * * * in the moonlight,”	57
“The mighty St. Lawrence now came into view,”	67
“Unequalled rowing, fishing and sailing upon the mighty St. Lawrence,”	71
	8

TO FACE PAGE

"The boss, of course! Now, who would you think?" 73

"He would shamble into my private office, his face wearing a smile," 74

"I squared my elbows across the opening of the ticket window," 82

"Catching sight of the 'Doc', a frantic gesture brings him to the berth at once," 87

"'Officer', he says, 'excuse me if I appear to hurry you. I would like to introduce you to some friends of mine,'" 89

"We chose to ride in a large covered wagon," 95

"We came into full view of the large imposing hotel," 97

"Old Mother Bartholdi, who stands with her lighted torch on Bedloe's Island, a guiding beacon for the traveler upon the deep," 101

"Farther in the distance loomed grand old New York with its 'sky scrapers' piled up against the clouds of night," 112

"'Why!' said O'Reilly, 'Professor, I'm delighted, *de-lighted*, I assure you,'" 117

"Next came the innocent, simple-mannered and pretty 'yaller gal' and George, her companion," 125

"At a 'Smoker' in one of New York's clubs, four bachelors lounged at a refreshment table," 129

TO FACE PAGE

"He shouldered his bike, jumped over the counter,
and * * * led the 100-yard dash to the
baggage-car," 136

"The steep-shelving rocks along the shore at Larch-
mont," 142

"Sidney Graham had resigned for the Summer
months his apartments," 154

"Andy bid adieu to his companions," 165

"The beautiful stretch of water which lay tranquilly
spread out before them," 170

"Fred proceeded at once to make arrangements," 172

"He led the advance with Andy, while Berry, Fred,
and Sidney followed in line, doing the lock-
step walk," 178

"Fred came out of his room with his coat and hat
off, talking in an apologizing tone," 181

"He found him standing with one foot placed in
the open tray of his trunk," 184

"Andy walked away from his friends muttering
vengeance on the colored man who had stolen
his suit," 195

"Dazed, paralyzed with fear, * * * Fred and
Sidney tumbled headlong upon each other
into the hallway," 212

"Fred * * * catching sight of Berry, let fly a
shoe in his direction," 216



Too Much Reputation.





Too Much Reputation.

My friend Read I have known for many years. We grew up together, and attended the same boarding-school, have always chummed together, and many times since boyhood, to escape from the harrassing details of our confining employment, have made little excursions into the country for recreation. Read enjoys the distinction of wielding the "blue pencil" in the capacity of an editor upon one of our "heavy-weight" metropolitan dailies. To this ex-

Too Much Reputation.

acting employment is chargeable, wholly, the serious manner he presents to the casual observer, and the sarcastic, even critical, air he assumes, from force of habit, towards his acquaintances. This is not the impression, however, which I wish the reader to retain of my friend Tom. Dignified and reserved in manner, of course, he is; but then back of this mask he has an appreciation of the humorous and ludicrous as keen as the more demonstrative of his sex.

We had just completed one of these annual excursions, and were returning from an ideal two weeks' stay at a Summer hotel on an island in the St. Lawrence, called Stanley Island, where Tom partially understood he had come as my guest. I, having spent several seasons at this beautiful Summer resort, had formed the acquaintance of many delightfully interesting people, to whom I introduced my friend Read.



Too Much Reputation.

I also further increased the demands upon his time and his supply of courteous behavior by presenting him to numerous members of my immediate family, who each in turn extended to him the hospitalities of their home and an invitation to any meal of the day which best suited his convenience. Poor Read! always reserved, conservative to a fault, peculiarly diffident, and bored by the ill-concealed admiration of the rural populace for a real live editor of a New York City daily,—it was toward the last day of our sojourn when he came to me with the complaint:

“Now, see here, I’ve been staying around this place, accepting invitations and the hospitality of your family and friends, till I cannot put myself under any further social obligations without a possible chance of ever returning the kindnesses shown to me.” Continuing, he explained: “If you will allow me to invite you, however, to



Too Much Reputation.

drive to one of the neighboring towns, a distance of twenty and odd miles, to where my own family originally lived, I will then be in a position to present you at least to cousins, aunts, uncles and relatives galore, who will, I am quite certain, rival, if not surpass, the efforts of your amiable connections, who have been untiring in their zeal to obligate me for life."

This wagon-drive in which Tom had become suddenly interested, was one we had often promised ourselves to take. It was across a piney-wooded sand plain, which to our youthful minds, when we had lived in that region, seemed a veritable Sahara. I, in my boyhood, had lived on the Canadian border, adjoining Franklin County, New York. My friend Tom resided at the county seat of Franklin. Between our homes lay this sand desert, occupying a belt of land about twenty miles in width. Across this plain Tom had often come for

Too Much Reputation.

a "fish" with me on the St. Lawrence, and again, I had often crossed the "plains" to visit Tom at the county seat and to see the County Fair. So, with a pleasant prospect of renewing our acquaintance with the old landmarks of the plain, a bargain was struck with our friend "Dan," a good story teller and the keeper of the best stables in town, to drive us to the home of Tom's relatives.

With pleasant good-byes, we drove out upon our way—I laying aside the mantle of responsibility I had shouldered for two weeks, which, without a murmur, Read now picked up—and Dan, the driver, hurried us on toward Noira, the village that Tom had left fifteen years gone by.

The first five miles we passed with pleasant but superficial remarks about the country. The second five miles of our journey we spent reminiscently, and decided that, to be accurate, it had been sixteen



Too Much Reputation.

years since either of us had traveled the old sandy "Pine Plains." Upon the third five miles of the ride, I held undisturbed control of the conversation. Glancing at my silent companion from time to time, it was very evident that his mind was preoccupied. When I had seen that look upon his face at other times, it had proven to be the outward sign of a mental discussion on the attitude his paper should take on such subjects as the Hawaiian question, the money agitation or government reforms. Respecting what I supposed was an argument of considerable moment which he was busying himself with, I gave up my irrelevant chatter for the time. His first and only remark made in the time it had taken to cover the last three miles of our afternoon's ride gave the key to the present situation.

"Well, now," said he, "when I come to think of it, I have an uncle who lives on



Too Much Reputation.

the outskirts of the town, just a mile from the village—at least, he did the last time we heard from him down in the city—and I believe we had better pull up there for to-night. We can visit with his family, then we will be at liberty to go up town the next day and have dinner with some of my other relatives."

"All right, old fellow," I replied. "I am in your hands now and will follow wherever you lead." I thought at the same time, though, that Tom had put himself through some "tall" thinking to arrive at such a seemingly unimportant decision. However, I was his guest and so said nothing.

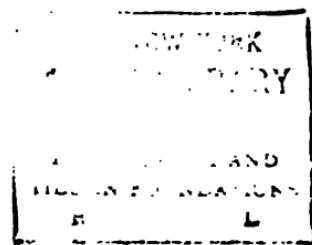
We spent the first night according to his plan, the family being extremely solicitous for our comfort. Next morning the uncle, anxious to show his appreciation of the presence of his city guests, volunteered to drive us in person into the village, then to



Too Much Reputation.

leave us, as we had requested, to shift for ourselves among the other relatives for the day. As we drove away from the door that A. M. the aunt inquired if she could not await dinner for us. "Oh, no," Read explained. "We won't be back for dinner, and probably not for supper, but we shall sleep here to-night, though."

The confidence with which he spoke dispelled, for the time being, at least, all doubt from my mind but that my friend was very much in touch with his relatives up in the town. We drove through the main street of the pretty village, the uncle pointing out to us the public buildings and improvements, of which he was modestly proud. We reached the post office at the hour of eleven, when the principal mail of the day had arrived and was being distributed. Read's uncle took his semi-weekly *Tribune* from his box, and wishing us a pleasant day, with the remark that he would be await-





"The old professor * * * stopped and inquired how the world fared with us."



Too Much Reputation.

ing us when we returned at night, turned his faithful old steed toward his home.

After bidding a respectful adieu to the uncle, I turned to find Tom. He had stationed himself at the entrance to the post office, and as the people came along for their mail, he held an informal reception. Cousin George Martin I was introduced to. Then the old professor, under whom each of us had spent many hours of anxious study, stopped and inquired with a studied dignity, how the world fared with us. Others of Tom's relatives we met. They each intimated, with an appreciable sense of pride, that they had heard of the progress Tom had made in his line of work; then they would dismiss us with the very courteous remark that they hoped to see us again before we left the town. These remarks, coupled with the extreme deference with which they greeted us, started a panicky feeling in me which centered about a

Too Much Reputation.

cavity quickly forming beneath the lower buttons of my waistcoat.

We lingered till the distribution of the mail was completed. My observations of the situation thus far, were these: Twelve o'clock had arrived, and no invitation to dinner was in sight; my appetite was increasing with each fleeting moment. Read's cousins and uncles had passed in review at the post office in sufficient numbers to lead me to believe that not many could be left in reserve from whom that tardy "invite" to dinner might come. I also observed that my friend was not in a quiet or undisturbed frame of mind. An anxious look had overspread his intellectual face and crept up his aquiline nose, ending in the frowning wrinkles of his forehead.

Tom, recovering himself from the disappointment which had shown itself momentarily on his stern features, said, with the glitter of a new hope in his eye, "Let's go

Too Much Reputation.

and call on 'Shorty,' our old school chum. He's in business around the corner here." So, we went, and we found "Shorty," but, to our dismay, during the conversation he informed us that only had he not remained a bachelor like ourselves, he might be able to invite us to dinner. Matters were getting worse, I thought, for Tom, even with his old friend "Shorty," silently resented the intimation that we were without an invitation to dinner.

We then directed our steps down the main street, neither of us referring to the time of day or our increasing appetites. Read was doing it, I argued—it was no picnic of mine, this dinner. To make a slight suggestion, however, I invited Tom to stop in and see an old friend of my family, Judge Bently. I hoped that the Judge might relieve the tension by taking us home with him to dinner; but after a short though pleasant visit, he remarked that his family were



Too Much Reputation.

away for the Summer and his house closed.

We bowed ourselves out as gracefully as possible, and while descending the office building stairs, Read encountered another cousin upon his way to dinner. We stood at the foot of the staircase and repeated our same story, which by this time was becoming stale, that we had been on a two weeks' vacation in the neighborhood, and had come into Noira to renew old acquaintances,—Read generally adding, where he thought it might produce the desired effect, that he had brought me over to meet some of his agreeable relatives. The gentleman said, in a tone of voice indicating his pleasure in being a relative of his, "Tom, we have heard of you now and then up north, here," then wished us a pleasant day and added that he hoped to see us again during our stay.

While hesitating as to which way to turn next, I heard a feminine voice call us by



Too Much Reputation.

name, and to my great surprise and delight, I met again after several years had intervened, from a former pleasant acquaintanceship in Florida, another relative of Read's, whose amiability, hospitality and reputation for entertaining I knew well,—Mrs. McLean.

“Gentlemen, how are you?” she began, in a pleasing voice, and I thought I could read in the inflection of every syllable, these words, which of all in the English language would have been the most inspiring to my sinking soul—“Won’t you come in to dinner with me?” But no! and just then the clock in the steeple struck one. She continued, in the same magnetic voice: “I heard you were in town, and if you will accept an impromptu invitation to six o’clock dinner, I would be delighted to have you meet some of my friends.”

“Charmed, of course,” said I; “but, Mrs. McLean, have you a horse and carriage

Too Much Reputation.

hereabouts, that we could borrow to drive out into the country, where we are staying?"

"No; really, boys, I had one, but sold him, you know—he wore out his shoes too quickly, don't you see," and with a humorous twinkle in her eyes, she hurried away, with the parting injunction, "Be sure you come early."

Poor Read! his finish was nearing. He knew that gnawing appetite of mine would not allow me to keep up my respectful silence about the dinner which was greatly overdue, much longer. So, making a masterly bluff by pulling himself up to his full height, he turned to me and impressively remarked, in a way to convey the idea, that up to that moment he had not thought about dinner or where we were likely to get it:

"Come along with me," says he, "we will now go down to Uncle So-and-So's, on



Too Much Reputation.

such-and-such a street, for dinner. I am always welcome there."

He started at a rapid and determined gait, and I was reassured. I chided myself for losing faith temporarily in my host. Visions of new potatoes, green corn, and leg of lamb flitted through my mind—my appetite fairly grinned at the prospect.

A few doors from the house to which we were going, some friends, who had also the good fortune to be included in the dinner-party to be given by Mrs. McLean, intercepted us to say they were pleased that they would see us that evening. Tom, barely courteous to them in his manner, begged to be excused, explaining that we were already late for dinner at their neighbor's, a couple of doors below.

Dismay now entered my heart again, for I had noted an expression of wonderment come at this remark upon the faces of the people we had just left. Tom rushed

Too Much Reputation.

up on to the veranda of the house indicated, and finding the door open, rang the bell and walked in with a *sang froid* air, which I knew usually meant familiarity with scenes.

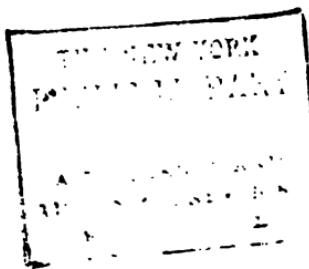
"Hang up your hat here, A. P." he said to me, "and take a seat in the next room."

I did as I was instructed. On second thought, politeness demanded that I wait an invitation from the hostess. I returned to the hallway and took my hat in hand again. Read was becoming impatient at the delay in answering the bell. At this moment a servant appeared at the head of the stair, and in answer to his inquiry for the family, he was calmly told that he was in the wrong place, that his friends asked for had moved away many years since.

I saw my time had come to act, for Tom was completely nonplussed. I must do something quickly, thought I, and whatever it is, Tom's dignity must be respected.



"He was calmly told that he was in the wrong place."



Too Much Reputation.

Still, I knew he would not be fool enough to reject any proposals which might get him out of his troubles.

“Tom, you see, of course,” I ventured.

“Well,” says Tom, “what is it?” with a glance which showed the white of his eyes, and boded no good to me if my suggestion was not calculated to relieve the present awkward situation.

“I am a very poor walker, you know, Tom, and besides, my shoes are a bad fit. Now, why not go over to the stables, get a carriage and drive about for a while?” The livery was attached to the hotel of the village, and I thought Tom might suggest of his own accord a dinner at the hotel. In fact, I fervently prayed that he would.

Tom may have seen his way out of the difficulty with honor, like a Spaniard, for he raised no objection to my plan. I procured the carriage, invited Tom to occupy a seat beside me, then, without stopping to in-

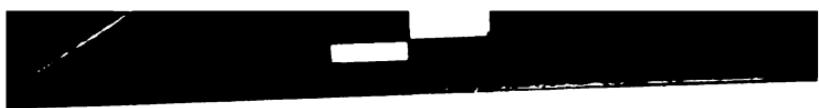


Too Much Reputation.

quire the way, lit out for a share in the delicious home-cooked meal I knew could be found at the uncle's and aunt's, a mile out of the town. No apologies were made by us and none were required by the uncle and aunt, who now and then must enjoy a pleasant laugh over the dinner their city guests had said they would not return for.



Too Much Manners.



Too Much Manners.

IT goes against my charitable grain somewhat to retail these little peculiarities of my friend Read, but Tom did truly have a run of hard luck during most of the time we traveled about on our last Summer's vacation.

The dinner episode which has just been related, had not given place, during the following week, to any strikingly new happenings, and something out of the ordinary was due very soon to occur to Read, or the



Too Much Manners.

reputation we had gained for original experiences would not be properly maintained.

Tom had discovered by this last adventure that to be burdened with the title of editor of a New York City daily, and in addition afflicted with the notion that his dignity of carriage must correspond with the elevated tone of his paper, were not winning cards to play in a town where his former acquaintances had not seen him in sixteen years, but among whom his reputation for knowledge of affairs political and otherwise had been increased in magnitude to such an alarming extent that, to use an expressive phrase, the natives approached him with fear and trembling.

"Too much dignity and manners doesn't work on a Summer vacation, I tell you, Tom. It may do in your office chair, where they've got to come to you, but out here in the mountains, it doesn't work for a cent."

Too Much Manners.

With this effervescent remark, and before the pop from the uncorking process had died away, I made my escape into the waiting-room at the railroad station.

The tickets we bought read to Paul Smith's in the Adirondack Mountains. Any of my readers who may be familiar with the touring of the Adirondack resorts, know of the first impressions made upon the guests as they alight at the mountain station, travel-stained and weary from the morning or afternoon trains. The six-horse tally-ho, the picturesquely dressed mountaineer driver, the grand, awe-inspiring mountains, in the midst of which you feel yourself grow diminutively less—each vies with the other in disturbing your reason, and causes you to question the reality of your existence.

The ride over to the hotel is one continuous five miles filled with pleasure, unequalled scenery and wonders in natural beauty,

Too Much Manners.

which bring the mind up to such an excited state of expectancy, that should an unaccustomed passenger upon that coach chance to meet one of his intimate friends upon his arrival at the hotel after this ride through wonderland, he might at first hardly be able to identify him, because of his enchanting surroundings.

Such a remarkable condition of affairs prevailed upon the arrival of the coach which brought Read and myself to this popular mountain resort for a twenty-four-hour stay, or for a longer time if we found the rates for accommodations did not require of us the purchase of the hotel for economy's sake.

The point of the incident, which, unfortunately for the reader, has caused him to wade through the foregoing introduction, was this:—

Poor Read, my friend and traveling companion, over-conscious, but a good fellow,

Too Much Manners.

got into a predicament where he found it necessary to be introduced to one of his own friends, a young lady "whom he knew quite well, and who he was aware knew him equally well"; but the circumstances surrounding their first glances of recognition placed each in an embarrassing position, both to themselves and their acquaintances; and to be released from the peculiar social restraint by which they each found themselves securely tied, an introduction in the proper way was an absolute necessity.

The coach, upon the top of which we were seated, bowled up to the landing platform of the hotel, and before the steps could be put in place for the passengers to alight, I discovered to my surprise and delight a number of my very intimate and charming friends of the gentler sex. They were waving an enthusiastic welcome to us from the veranda, and before we could reach the



Too Much Manners.

steps leading to the hotel office, came trooping down to meet us, and soon we were in the midst of an animated group eager for news from the outside world.

Read, engaged with his newly-made acquaintances, did not notice that a very attractive and stylishly dressed young lady, sitting by a group of friends not far from where he stood, had made several attempts to receive a nod of recognition from him. She had bowed twice to him to my knowledge. Finally she gave up in disgust, provoked that she had wasted her efforts upon a man on whom she believed she had failed, after an acquaintance which had been spasmodically kept up for a year's time, to make an impression sufficiently well-stamped to assure her recognition when out of her customary surroundings. Being firmly convinced that her conception of the situation was correct, the young lady took refuge with her friends, and proceeded dur-

Too Much Manners.

ing the remainder of the afternoon to squelch poor Read in a manner which was cruelly well-planned and executed.

We stood talking with our friends grouped about the piazza until topics of interest had been discussed and dismissed and conversation lagged, when somebody proposed a row upon the lake, and the company departed for the boat-landing, Read and myself preferring to remain and explore our new surroundings.

We made a tour of the grounds, and then feeling well pleased with the choice we had made of a place in which to spend the remainder of our vacation, consulted the room-clerk of the hotel and acquainted him with our wish to remain a few days.

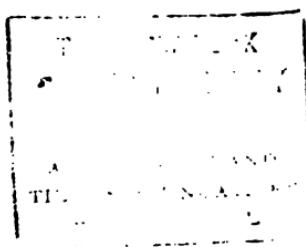
Returning to the veranda, we sat at the head of the stairs leading up from the lawn and coach landing. Here we had another unobstructed view of the scenery and the guests who were strolling about. Pres-



Too Much Manners.

ently a young lady came walking jauntily across the lawn and tripped gracefully up the steps directly facing us. She was dressed in a suit ostensibly for golf playing. I recognized her at once as the stylishly dressed young woman who had previously made the advances which unfortunately were unnoticed by my friend Read, for whom they were intended. Perhaps it was to further embarrass poor Read that she made the change in costume; however that may be, as the charming golf-player passed us with a look completely ignoring our existence, Read glanced up quickly, and with a startled air caught my wrist, which lay listlessly over the arm of the rocker, as he exclaimed:

“Why, man, I’ve seen that coat before! That green velvet collar and those brass buttons! I know them well. If she would only turn and come this way again! I am positive she is a friend of mine!”





"With a withering indifference to his presence, the bewitching golf-player swept past us."

Too Much Manners.

"Oh, no, Tom," said I, "you can't work that off on me! She doesn't know you from a 'chimpanzee'. Besides, if there's any flirting to be done, just remember that I saw her first."

This sally on my part made Read quite nervous; he thought that he had to convince me also that the wearer of the golf suit was really an acquaintance of his. While we joked, the lady returned through the French window of the reading-room onto the veranda, and came directly toward us. Read grabbed the arm of his chair convulsively and rose half way up to greet his friend, but with a withering indifference to his presence, the bewitching golf-player swept past us, on down the stairs, and crossed the lawn to the boat landing.

Tom, nonplussed and half stunned, turned to me and remarked:

"I swear I know that girl! She is Miss De L——, from the west side, New York



Too Much Manners.

City." I knew Read was dead in earnest, but I could not lose the opportunity of having a little fun with him. I suggested in a serious tone of voice that we change our position, for I feared the view of the wonderful scenery before us was having a queer effect upon him.

Recovering from the paralyzing shock he had just received, and to satisfy himself that there could be no mistake, Read consulted the hotel register, and there among the recent arrivals the name of the ill-behaved young lady of his acquaintance figured prominently.

Up to this time I had not been acting a part calculated to inspire my friend with the idea that I had much belief in his statement that he knew the lady in question. The time had come, however, when my bantering tone of apparent incredulity must cease. I was a friend of Tom's,—a slight to him was a slight to me; yet, al-

Too Much Manners.

though, had I cared to, I could have put poor Read on "easy street" long before then, having already seen the advances the young lady had made to be agreeable, the fact was that I had not blamed her at all for the disciplining she was giving Tom, although he was my friend.

Seven o'clock dinner was approaching and the ladies had disappeared into their rooms to dress, and with them went the fascinating but elusive golfer. Read and I held a consultation to decide whether we should take the nine o'clock train back to the city or remain for a day or two. Read was in favor of leaving before dinner, even though he was told that he would have to walk a distance of five miles to the station. The place, he said, had no charm for him; in fact, he thought it was a very uncomfortable place to be in.

We decided to leave that night. Dinner was announced, and Tom and I were two



Too Much Manners.

of the first in the dining-room. We thought that the less conspicuous we made ourselves the less would be our embarrassment in the presence of Read's fair Tartar and her sympathizing friends.

This little advantage over the enemy which we had congratulated ourselves upon securing was quickly swept away by the appearance in the hallway leading to the dining-room, of a vision of loveliness which soon entered and occupied a seat at an adjoining table directly facing us at a distance of three table-lengths away. Immediately, as if by a previous arrangement, Read's unrelenting, sweet-mannered friend was joined by another young lady, in appearance equally charming. There they sat curiously observing the "new men" through their jeweled lorgnettes, with a studied indifference which was truly to be admired. Read said he thought his humiliation had reached the lowest rung of

Too Much Manners.

the ladder, but, alas ! it had not—there was more to come.

While glancing about the room to find something which might serve as an excuse for looking in any direction except in front of me, I was peculiarly rewarded, as, coming toward me from the entrance, I saw a fashionably attired lady of middle age. We each recognized the other, and I bounded out of my chair, very pleased to meet again a charming acquaintance I had made at Narragansett Pier the preceding month.

I introduced my friend Read, and while standing, my amiable acquaintance remarked that her daughter was sitting a few tables distant from us with her friend, Miss De L—, from New York, and that immediately after dinner she wished us to meet them both. I told her I would be honored to meet her daughter, adding significantly that I knew Mr. Read would be delighted



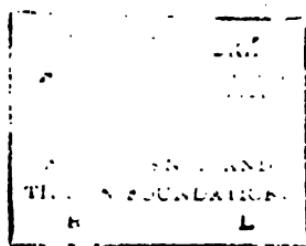
Too Much Manners.

with the opportunity which she proposed to give us.

Poor Tom! both pleased and embarrassed, he could not "face out" the dinner. "I'll wait for you out on the porch," said he. "I need a good smoke; I feel as though I hadn't had one for days."

With these words, and a parting injunction for me not to delay in catching the eight o'clock 'bus for the train for New York, Tom went to find solace in his cigar.

Although a very rapid eater at meals, I timed myself to finish with my friends, and joined them as I passed out of the dining-room. I enquired of Miss de L—— if she would not allow me to present my friend, who had gone to have a quiet smoke. With an ill-concealed twinkle of the eye she said she was always pleased to make the acquaintance of the friends of her charming chaperone. I lost no time in hunting the whereabouts of Read.





"As they clasped hands, each burst into a ringing laugh."

Too Much Manners.

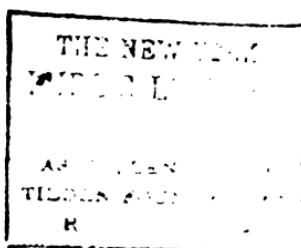
“Come with me, you conscientious, dignified old pumpkin-head!” said I; “they want you.”

Assuming as much dignity as I could command, I presented Tom, first to the daughter of my acquaintance, and then, with added pomp, I introduced Read to his own friend, Miss De L——. As they clasped hands, each burst into a ringing laugh. Read drew the now passive hand of his friend through his arm, and, without the consent of the chaperone, two figures sat in one of the inviting corners of the veranda for the balance of the evening. Although the driver of the 'bus to the eight o'clock train for New York shouted his notice of departure right under the veranda where two “lone figures” sat, Tom swears that the departure of the 'bus was not announced that evening, but as we lingered for two days longer at the hotel, no one thought it worth while to dispute it.



Ned's Confidence.







..They were strolling in the moonlight."

Ned's Confidence.

THEY were strolling in the moonlight. The elms which lined the avenue and overhung the roadway in gracefully formed arches, curved in and out passing their comfortable Summer house. The inducements offered for romancing were strong. Ned lighted a fresh cigar, for he had discovered a sympathetic listener in his friend Mortimer.

"Do you know, Mort," began Ned, "I



Ned's Confidence.

have never heard you refer partially to any one in particular of the gentler sex, yet I have watched your face, and something tells me that I could risk confiding in you what is uppermost in my mind."

"Really? Well, how long have you been troubled with this wakefulness, Ned?" humorously inquired Mortimer.

"No, honest, old chap. No joking now. I have no one else to go to about this, so you must hear my story."

"Well, go on with the story," returned he. Mortimer Carey had come up from the city to spend the night with his friend Ned MacArthur at Kinwood Park.

Ned's Story.—"It was early last Winter that I met the 'little girl,' and it was funny, too, how that experience turned out. She had been reading a book, and just to be polite, I asked her about the leading characters."

Ned's Confidence.

"Now, there is where you put your foot in it, Ned," interposed Mortimer.

"No, no, I didn't," argued Ned. "That is how the acquaintance really began. I asked her about the book and she said I ought to read it. She knew from what she had heard from me, she said, that it was just suited to my tastes, and wouldn't I take her copy which she had just finished reading. And with a pretty, winning smile she added shyly, 'Perhaps some evening we may discuss it together.' Well, I took the book home. Four hundred pages, 12 mo., and fine print at that. I had to read that book, you see, and I had to read it before I could call again, and every time I thought of that charming smile, those cherry lips and that girlish head of wavy brown hair, that confounded book seemed to grow in size, fifty pages at a time.

"Well, after sitting up late nights, and making Hartley, my brother, swear about



Ned's Confidence.

keeping the lights burning so that he couldn't sleep, I finished the book. The next night I was over at the 'little lady's' house to 'discuss the characters.' But I was unfortunate. She had a reception to which she 'really had to go,' and when she dropped her eyes and tenderly said she was 'so sorry' and that she would 'very much rather stay at home,' I don't know how I ever kept my arms where they belonged. Well, she gave me another book (a short one, I thanked fate), and told me to come again the following week, that she should be at home any evening. Time dragged for the balance of the week, but I was over there Monday night,—but, behold! a chaperone! The aunt with whom she was visiting was there, too."

"Did she have a book, too, Ned, that she wanted you to read?" inquired Mortimer, jokingly.

"Don't know," returned Ned. "She

Ned's Confidence.

seemed to like our society awfully well, because she stayed as long as I did. I didn't intend to be 'latched in' on reading any more books just then, so I invited the 'little girl' to accompany me to the theatre, and left it for her to choose the play and the night. I was happy over the prospect, already, of having the whole evening with my little dear, all to myself to tell the innumerable interesting things which I had in mind to say, and never yet had had the chance to say to her. Well, she was to let me know *very soon!* Oh, that 'very soon' seemed to me the sweetest words I had ever heard. I tell you frankly, old man, I had it bad."

"You've got it now, you old chump! don't you know you have?" ejaculated Mortimer.

"Yes, I do know it," answered Ned, half rebelliously. "Every hour, every minute of the day, I know it. I can't get away

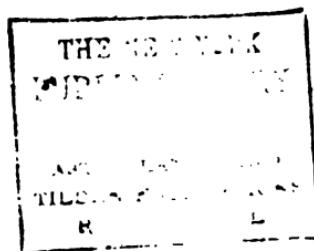


Ned's Confidence.

from the truth. I can't deceive myself any longer. I can't bear this gnawing at my heart. It makes me restless, dissatisfied, irritable and disagreeable with my acquaintances, and Hartley, God bless his generous soul,—it makes me mad to think he won't even get provoked at me for treating him so shabbily. If he would only get mad and give me back some of my impudence, I would feel better, but he won't,—bless his heart, he's the best little fellow I ever will know on this earth. I love that 'little girl' to distraction and I know he believes it isn't best that I should."

"Well, let's get back to the theatre party," suggested Mortimer.

"That's so, I am skipping a whole lot, and my cigar has gone out, too. Just wait till I get another light." The two friends had strolled up through the park to a Summer-house with open sides, which was perched upon a large flat rock overlooking





"Overlooking the Long Island Sound * * * in the moonlight."

Ned's Confidence.

the Long Island Sound. There they seated themselves in the moonlight, and the lapping of the incoming tide against the rocks beneath them, and the squeaking of the sail booms of the yachts which swung to and fro in the light Summer breeze, just off the point, offered another bid for Ned to proceed with his story.

"In a day or two after that," continued Ned, "I got a perfumed little note which said that she had selected Thanksgiving night for the theatre entertainment. At Daly's a very pretty play was being given, and there it would please her to go. The next morning I was at the box-office soon after it was opened, and secured my two seats. That night I saw my regular stable-man and hired a hansom cab, the only vehicle he had left because of the holiday demand. Then I sent an order for a bouquet of American beauty roses to be delivered next evening to my 'little queen'"



Ned's Confidence.

"Oh, say, Ned, cut it down," broke in Mortimer. "The family will think we have fallen off 'Lover's Rock' into the sea, and the next thing we hear will be the bell in the tower at the fire-house, ringing an alarm for the volunteer firemen to turn out to find us."

"They won't miss us. Well," continued Ned, "the night came and I went over in my hansom cab. Filled with pride and happiness, I about took up the whole space on the narrow seat. I was a little late, and in answer to my ring, the door opened to show me 'the aunt' in all her splendor and importance ready to chaperone my 'little love' and myself to the show. The carriage, by thunder! thought I, can only accommodate two, and my tickets call only for two seats. I must do some tall planning and do it mighty sudden, too, says I to myself. 'Only one of my carriages have come, Mrs. Franklin,' I explained, with a bow and

Ned's Confidence.

my best company smile. 'You see this being a holiday, I could only get hansom cabs, so I will let you and Miss Alice ride ahead of me, and I will follow in another cab.'

"Good luck favored me. At that moment I hailed a passing two-wheeler which came in sight, and we started. My cherished dream of happiness! my little sweetheart! for whom I had read the four-hundred-page book, was ahead in the hansom cab with 'the aunt,' and I kicking the varnish off the foot-board of the two-wheeler, bringing up the rear advance. At the theatre I had to tell the same 'whopper.' Could only get two seats together at that late date, the holiday rush, etc. I would try and get a seat near at hand and would be near by, when the play was over. Think of it, Mortimer, all that penance which I did to have this evening alone with Alice, and then to have to stand up in the rear

Ned's Confidence.

and see the solicitous aunt enjoy my seat by the side of my beloved."

"I would call that too much aunt, Ned," remarked Mortimer, to fill a lull in the story.

"That isn't all, either," went on Ned.

"Well, call it fourth and lastly, Ned, anyway, and let's go home. You are getting further into trouble all the time," observed Mortimer.

"When the play was out," Ned went on, "I thought I could make up in a way for my lost opportunities by giving a little supper over at the Waldorf-Astoria, and perhaps then the 'aunt' might become generous-hearted and allow me a moment of bliss alone with my 'little dear,' in return for my harrassing troubles, which I was charging in full to her. A light wine for the chaperone, I thought, would be a good investment, so I tried it on, and it certainly gave me hope, for when we were

Ned's Confidence.

ready to start home, the aunt magnanimously suggested that we all ride home in the same hansom. Now, says I, my turn has come. I sit in the middle and we will hold hands, if I know a thing at all. But that aunt was a 'corker', Mortimer,—I hadn't figured on that. I made a play for the middle seat, but 'aunt' was bossing the job.

"'You sit down, Mr. MacArthur,' aunt calmly remarked, 'and I will sit on your lap, or in the middle, just as you can best arrange it.' Now, wasn't that a 'knocker?'" It was the limit for my good behavior, but before I could express an opinion, she wedged in between my darling and me, and jealously guarded her charge till the house was reached again. Now, how long do you think that kind of discipline would do for me? Well, never mind answering, I'll tell you: I was engaged to that 'little girl' in just a week from that time.



Ned's Confidence.

"Now, why it was so, I don't exactly know, but I never introduced brother to Alice at all, and it seemed to me that I didn't want to tell him all about this little love affair as I had always done before on similar occasions, and I felt guilty, and every night when I came in from spending the evening around at Alice's, I wanted to tell Hartley I had become engaged; but he seemed so ignorant of what was going on in my mind, and asked no questions, that as time went on, and I was silent, I found it would be very hard for me to tell him. Weeks went by and Alice and I began to have our little lovers' quarrels, and one night we both were irritable and foolish, and she gave me back the engagement ring. I hurried home, and rushing into brother's room, threw the ring down on the table and said,

"There it is, Hartley. It's all up now. You didn't want me to get engaged to

Ned's Confidence.

Alice, I know, but now I have come back to you to stay. Are you pleased or not?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Ned," laughed Hartley, "when you start in next time, go it on a different plan, never mind having your spite out on the aunt. Oh, you didn't fool me, Ned. I know you like a book. I haven't been with you all these years not to know when you are having trouble. Now, begin over again and do do it right this time."

"Oh, I can't now", I said to Hartley. "It's too late. We called it all off to-night. I'm done forever."

"Now that's the belief I have been trying to live up to all Summer, and I'll tell you, Mortimer, it's the hardest fight I ever made, and I have lost. I love the 'little girl' and I am going to let the whole world know it if I can. Now, Mortimer, I am going to send a messenger to Alice with a letter from me in the morning, and if she



Ned's Confidence.

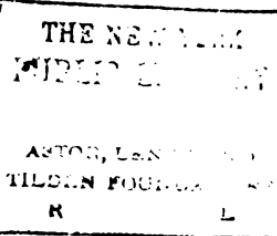
asks me to come back to her, I may want to stay at your apartments to-morrow night, in the city. But now, Mort, promise me you won't tell Hartley about this. I can't bear to confess to him again."

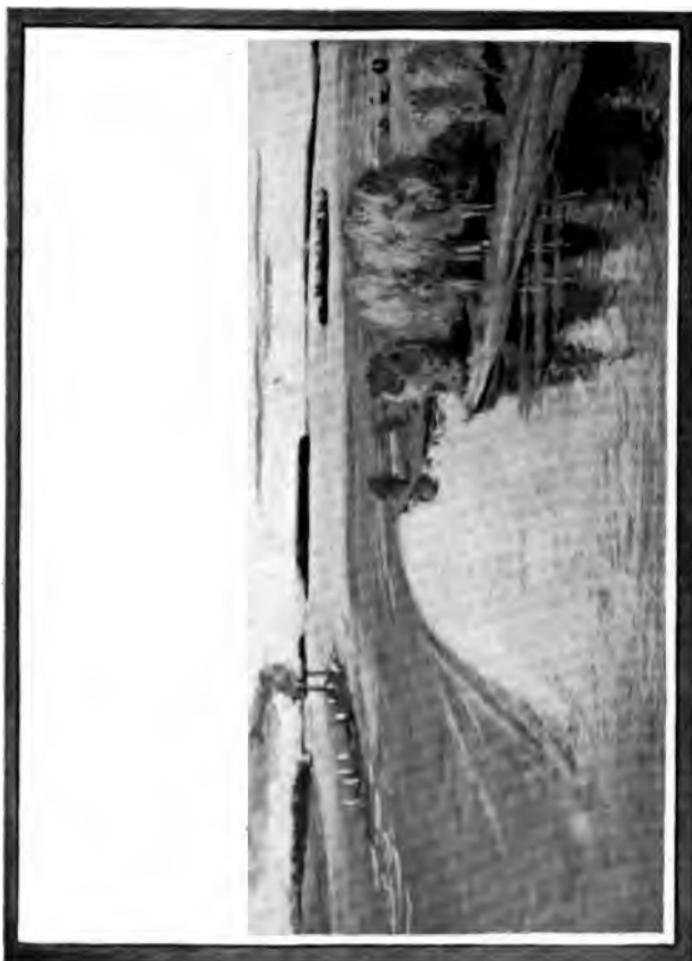
"Of course, I won't tell him, Ned, if you don't want me to; but 'the world loves a lover,' and if you are sure you *do* love this 'little girl,' as you call her, don't let her escape. It might mean her unhappiness for life as well as your own. Now, let's go back, and see what the folks are doing at the house; they may want us to make up a hand at whist. Let's go in and do the agreeable."

The next night Mortimer had a room-mate at his city apartments, and six weeks later he brought home a package which was labelled "wedding present;" then he sent it away with a messenger to Miss Alice Carew.

*A Personally Conducted
Tour.*







.. "The mighty St. Lawrence now came into view."



A Personally Conducted Tour.

THE generally accepted interpretation of what I have taken the liberty of heading this sketch (with respectful apologies to Cook, Gaza and others—to whom I hope to demonstrate that I have no desire or lingering ambition, even of the dangerous amateur color, to oppose them for a share of their legitimately earned reputation and business) is, a party of people who have come together in answer to some interestingly described trip of travel for sight-

A Personally Conducted Tour.

seeing and pleasure, as advertised by some of our enterprising American touring companies. A professional guide is put in charge of the tourists. His duties consist principally in piloting the members of his party safely to the hotels and eating-houses from which his company has secured the most advantageous rates, and in seeing that the itinerary is completed within the prescribed time.

The Personally Conducted Tour, which it fell to my lot to have the honor of conducting, was planned and run on entirely new lines of procedure from those which characterize the touring companies. The rules and regulations employed and exacted of the "conductor" by the members of this company, I can assure my most incredulous reader, had no precedents from which to appeal. Nor, however, was it necessary. It was a jolly party of old friends. The "Conductor" himself had done all the ad-



A Personally Conducted Tour.

vertising. The pleasures he promised the converts whom he made (from Summer trips previously taken to places whose popularity was well known) were untold, and also peculiarly different from those they had elsewhere enjoyed.

But the exact location of the place where this versatile "Conductor" wished his company of friends to go, he was unable to tell those who thought it necessary to inquire. There are no maps published in the United States which show the location of Dundee, Canada, and not many in Canada itself are printed whose publishers think it necessary to honor Dundee with the slightest ink spot. However, the final decision from all was: "The 'Conductor' knows the place. We will meet him at the Grand Central Depot, New York, and he will do the rest."

How many did I say composed this interesting company, so wonderfully endowed with such unlimited faith in their "Personal



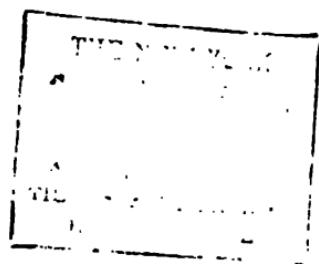
A Personally Conducted Tour.

Conductor"? There were ten of us, and I had written to the palace-car company to reserve all of the berths in one of the cars which would be attached to the Montreal express, via Dr. Webb's Road through the Adirondack Mountains, the route I purposed to follow in reaching Stanley Island, going to my native town of Dundee, then taking passage down the winding Salmon River, a distance of four miles, to the Arcadian Archipelago in the St. Lawrence at the head of Lake St. Francis.

Easy to read is this description, but I feel reasonably safe in venturing the remark that my readers have never before heard of the location mentioned. Dundee, Stanley Island, and the surrounding country, picturesque in its primitiveness, I had described on different occasions to the friends who had now decided to accompany me on my annual trip to this Arcadia, of which I claim the distinction of being the



"Unequalled rowing, fishing and sailing upon the mighty St. Lawrence."





A Personally Conducted Tour.

first discoverer to the American tourist and pleasure-seeker.

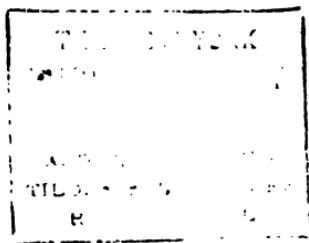
The natural beauties of the scenery, the quaint customs of the native inhabitants, the interest centering around the tribes of Indians who inhabit the islands as well as government reservations on the shores near by, and, above all, the claim, which is never questioned, for unequalled rowing, fishing and sailing upon the mighty St. Lawrence, whose turquoise-blue waters flow majestically past the group of islands, spreading out through its different channels, here and there forming a miniature lake whose inlet and outlet can only be discovered after a careful search of its surrounding rush banks —these are the peculiar and alluring features of this ideal vacation-land.

At this particular point in the St. Lawrence, grouped at short distances apart, but covering an area of five miles from shore to shore and extending for several

A Personally Conducted Tour.

miles down stream, are numerous beautifully situated islands. Many are thickly wooded, some under cultivation, and still others are tended only by nature's gardener. For years I had fished and hunted among them, camped on their shores, and cooked the fish I had caught by holding them up to the blaze on a pointed stick, while the Indian guide grinned with delight at my awkwardness.

These were the good times of which I had told my friends. My Arcadian Archipelago was well known to them by hearsay. "But how shall we get there?" was always the query they made and the stumbling-block which had heretofore seemed impossible to surmount, when they had been disposed to come to visit me in reply to former invitations sent from the islands. This Summer I had promised to take them along with me and also to leave a guarantee with the remaining members of their fami-





The bus, of course! Now, who would you think? ...

A Personally Conducted Tour.

lies that they should return in safety to them.

I am a business man, and as such I imagine myself extremely well employed with the little propositions which consume the day in explaining to the satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, of those who have presented them, that "now, really, this is the best I can do in the matter, and you can think it over and act if you care to, and I will do the same; so you will have to excuse me just now, for you see I am quite busy." The button is pressed, and the office-boy tells you someone else is very anxious to get only a minute of your time; and so it goes during the day with every business man. Imagine, if you can, the effect produced upon my office help by my new line of callers during the week previous to leaving on my yearly outing.

"Was the 'Personal Conductor' in?" they would inquire.



A Personally Conducted Tour.

“Who?” asks the bewildered office-boy.

“The boss, of course! Now, who would you think? Just tell him that his friend Maxwell is out here.”

This style of message to be carried in to the proprietor was not in the usually deferential tone employed by the ordinary solicitor in quest of business, and the boy hesitated, but delivered his message, assuming an apologizing manner.

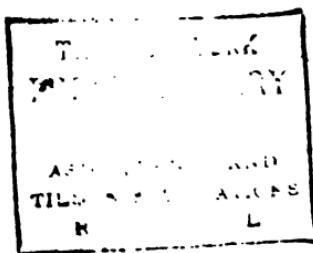
At another time he would shamble into my private office, his face wearing a smile, which, after I had seen it once, made it unnecessary for him to say more.

“A lady, sir, says she wishes to see you personally.”

To save time, while the caller was being ushered in I would take from one of the compartments in my desk the railroad guides and maps which I had procured to describe the trip, and also cards on which was carefully and legibly written the ad-

"He would shamble into my private office, his face wearing a smile."





A Personally Conducted Tour.

dress of the hotel to which mail could be forwarded to reach my guests while sojourning under my direction. After all questions were satisfactorily answered, callers of the gentler sex would make this explanation—that as the day approached for leaving, they were possessed of a feeling of unrest and uncertainty, so that, although they wished me to know that they had perfect confidence in me and my knowledge of the undiscovered country to which I was about to take them, they yet wished to hear me confirm the statements once more, just to make sure.

“Quite right, quite right, Mrs. C—,” I would answer; “you just have your trunks at the station in time and be there yourself, and the rest will be easy for you.”

In this way I disposed of the lady callers. But my bachelor friends! I was positive that should I not succeed in giving them opportunities for a jolly time while upon

A Personally Conducted Tour.

the trip, the fun they had had with me before the start was made would amply repay them for having joined the party. A week before I had arranged to leave with my company of friends, I was forced by the good-natured yet embarrassing jests of my none too charitable bachelor friends to desert my club.

“Any golf playing in Dundee, old man?” they would ask. “What would be the chances for getting up a fox hunt, and having a jolly ride to hounds across country up there?”

“None, whatever,” I would reply. “Nothing at all like that.”

“I suppose there are plenty of chances to have tally-ho rides about there—eh, old chap?”

“None,” says I, “none,” with a firmness of tone which should have made them change the subject.

“A few deer now and then, I suppose, to

A Personally Conducted Tour.

have a go at, any way," one of the party would question in a tone of voice extremely trying at such a time.

"No—confound it, no! Fish—fish, is what you get—plenty of fish. Who ever heard of tally-ho driving or shooting deer on the islands in the St. Lawrence! You fellows make me tired!" And with this parting shot I would attempt to leave them.

"Don't go, old chap, stay and tell us more about it. You know we can't all be 'The Conductor.' We are willing to chop wood, row boats, fry the fish or do any old thing, but just tell us again where the place is."

"Not another explanation," says I. "'Meet me at the station' is all the information you chaps deserve from me." And that was all they did get until we met for the eight o'clock train at the Grand Central Station, New York, on the night appointed.



A Personally Conducted Tour.

The evening on which we were to leave, I had invited two of my early supporters of the plan which I had formulated for exploring and pleasure purposes into Canada, to dine with me at one of the hotels in the close neighborhood of the railroad station. The two unfortunates in question had each been companions with me on the same trip the year previous, but were prevented from going upon this occasion, at the last hour, by some pressing business demands which would keep them at home. While we talked and ate in comfort and enjoyment of one another's company, the time was stealing unnoticed and quickly away.

In the meanwhile, the members of the party had assembled promptly on time at the station. They had each stacked their hand-baggage around a convenient post in the waiting-room; then began a hunt for the "Conductor"—aimlessly at first, then

A Personally Conducted Tour.

casually, next interestedly, and finally excitedly, but the "Personal Conductor" could not be found. Alas! they said, it was too true, he had not shown up. Train-time was approaching and something had to be done. No baggage had been checked, no berths secured, no railroad-tickets bought, and some of my guests had even allowed that it was a very strange thing for me to do. Now they were all there, what did I mean to do about it?

At this interesting juncture, a sudden thought came to me that I had important duties to perform over at the station; so playing the absent-minded man's trick, I bid a hurried farewell to my dinner guests and left them with my regrets and the dinner bill to pay. Rushing into the station, I found a line had formed extending from the ticket window of the Palace-Car Co., down to the street entrance, fifty or more anxious travelers eager to secure sleeping

A Personally Conducted Tour.

accommodations at almost any price. I took up my position and edged along toward the ticket-window. Before I had been discovered by the anxious members of my party, I had succeeded in "counting noses" and could account for nearly all the party.

Signaling to my old sporting associate, "the Doc," whom I caught sight of, I inquired of him what had been the extent of the damage caused by my tardiness. He informed me with considerable spirit that I was under obligations to him already to a considerable extent for having substituted in the capacity of baggage-man and also for acting the "Bureau of Information" rôle, which he hoped he had done to my credit.

"Good! old pard," said I. "There are ten berths reserved for us up there at the head of this line, but I can only see nine of us. There is one lady missing. She must be found before I reach my turn at the win-

A Personally Conducted Tour.

dow, or, if not, some of us will have to do the sitting-up act for the balance of the night if we find her after I pass my turn at the window. Now, 'Doc,' get a move on you and find her."

"But I don't know the lady. Couldn't tell her if I was to see her."

"Never mind now, go and find her. Can't you see I am getting nearer that window every second? I don't want to sit up all night, neither do you."

"Doc," game as ever, makes the hunt himself, then starts everybody else looking for the missing lady. I near the window. The reports that reach me from my scouts, sent out in every direction, are not hopeful. I reach the window and call for the ten berths reserved in my name. The men in line behind me, heretofore courteous enough under such conditions, now, hearing the demand for ten berths, and having seen the messages brought to me from all parts

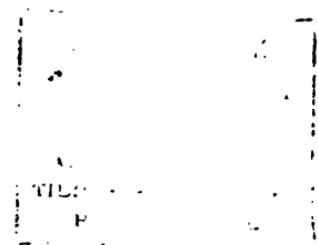
A Personally Conducted Tour.

of the waiting-room, interpreted my position in the line as an impromptu broker, with a scheme devised which might result in their being left without a berth for the night. The disturbance my conferrees in the line created, succeeded to this extent against me. The ticket-man, when I asked for the ten sleeping apartments which had been reserved, hesitated. At first, he said there were not that many left. I inquired whether a request had not been received to hold in my name that number of berths. Yes, he thought there had.

"Well, then, why don't you produce them?" said I. At this stage of the argument, calls were very audibly heard to chuck me out of the line. I squared my elbows across the opening of the ticket window and announced to my friends (?) in line, who were evidently not in entire accord with me, that I should hold the window until after the train had left if the tickets



"I squared my elbows across the opening of the ticket window."



TITLE
P

A Personally Conducted Tour.

were not forthcoming. The clerk mumbled a comment to himself.—“I need to be identified, eh! Well, that’s easy enough for me,” thought I, in answer.

Shouting to “Doc” to come and rescue me, he brought up convincing evidence in the form of an excited female member of our party, who was declaring in a voice pitched several notes above a whisper, that we would all miss the train, and it was simply awful to be treated in this way. In self-defense, and because the train upon which we were to leave could not be held any longer, and also to quell the small riot in progress among the nervous, waiting men behind me, I was given my ten tickets for the berths, and told in very expressive and inelegant language by the next in line to clear out. With this parting salute ringing in my ears, we made a rush for the gate which was just closing, and ushered through with us the missing member of the party,

A Personally Conducted Tour.

who had been with her father, explaining the route over which they wished their baggage checked for the benefit of the suspicious baggageman. We ran for the coach, getting aboard as the train moved.

The express train for Montreal via the Adirondack Mountains pulls out from the Grand Central Station, New York City, at eight o'clock in the evening. At Utica it leaves the New York Central main line, then continuing over the Dr. Webb branch of the Vanderbilt system of railroads through the Adirondack Mountains, emerges on the other side of the range at Malone, New York State, about seven o'clock in the morning. At a small station a few miles farther on, named Athlestan, which is the first stop in Canada, the Canadian customs-officer boards the train and continues to search the baggage of the passengers until he meets the day express for

A Personally Conducted Tour.

New York City at a point not far distant from Montreal.

This arrangement admits of ample time to inspect the luggage of the through passengers to Montreal, but is not planned by the officer to meet the convenience of the passengers who were ticketed to change cars at Huntington (the junction for Dundee and Stanley Island), a station four miles farther along the line from the point where the officer boarded the train. Trouble began here again for the "Personal Conductor."

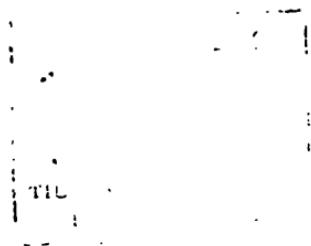
The flying start we had made from the city, and the excited state of mind into which I had succeeded in placing my guests, afforded sufficient diversion for the party for the balance of that night, and it was not required of the "Conductor" to "bring on" any other entertainment. With a parting good-night, the "Conductor" advised each one to be up early the next morning

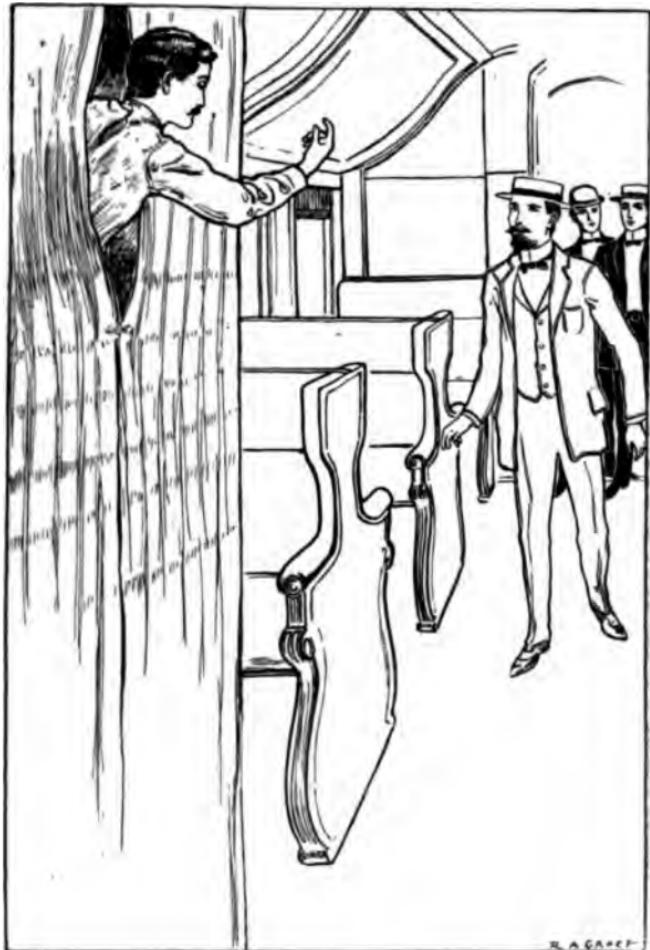
A Personally Conducted Tour.

and from the observation car view the wonderful scenery of the northern slope of the Adirondack Mountains.

Five o'clock next morning found the obedient pleasure-seekers out on the platforms of the car. Well repaid by the incomparable scenery and the freshness of the atmosphere, they each one had developed an appetite for breakfast which would not admit of any delay on the part of the attendants of the *buffet* (who are not particularly noted for alacrity of movement at any time). Each member of the party had ordered for himself a very liberal breakfast, and asked as a special request of the waiter that he bring what had been ordered quickly, for they were ravenously hungry, they said.

The "Personal Conductor" the while has been slumbering peacefully in his upper berth, until the Angel of Dawn, already tardy in taking his departure, flaps his sil-





"Catching sight of the 'Doc', a frantic gesture brings him to the berth at once."

A Personally Conducted Tour.

very wings in the face of his sleepy charge, then escapes out of the transom of the car as "old Sol" peeps in at the window, flashing his rays of sunlight and awakening the delinquent. Peering out from behind the curtains of his berth with alarm stamped upon his face, he takes in the situation. Malone has been reached. Six miles farther on the customs-officer would come aboard the train, then four miles farther along only, they must change cars. Breakfast is being served. Judging from past experience, a full hour should be calculated upon for the completion of that undertaking alone.

"Here is another state of affairs!" says the "Conductor" to himself. Catching sight of the "Doc," a frantic gesture brings him to the berth at once.

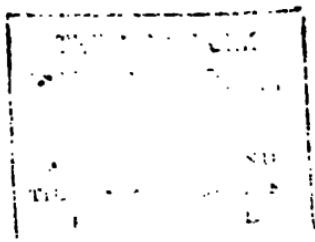
"Sacred, fighting cats, 'Doc,' what's going on? Shut off the breakfast orders, quick! Get me a ladder to climb down from this roost, and for heaven's sake get a move

A Personally Conducted Tour.

on you. You've only ten miles in which to get me dressed, have the baggage searched, and get the crowd off at the junction." Scrambling down the ladder with collar, tie and vest in one hand, shoes in another, the "Conductor" shouted the order as he retreated in double-quick time to the dressing room.

"Change cars in ten minutes!"—A storm of disapproval of the "Conductor" arose, but the "Doc" assuming command, directed that all checks for baggage be handed to him at once, and all breakfasts be declared off.

Of course it could not be expected that the "Personal Conductor" stood in very high esteem with the ladies of the party at this moment. The one thing in favor of his escaping the well-deserved censure of his hungry tourists was the lack of time. The present moment was one for action, not words, and the feverish interest with which





"'Officer,' he says, 'excuse me if I appear to hurry you—I would like to introduce you to some friends of mine.'"

A Personally Conducted Tour.

the doctor collected the baggage-checks and trunk-keys to be turned over to the customs-officer, was convincing proof that breakfast was a matter of little importance compared with the urgent undertaking at hand.

While the doctor struggled with the different members of the party to procure their checks, which, although each declared they had put them away in a safe place, it required the usual diligent search to find, the "Conductor" had in the meantime tumbled into his clothing, and was the first passenger on the train to greet the customs-officer as he came aboard.

"Officer," he says, "excuse me, if I appear to hurry you—I would like to introduce you to some friends of mine in this car. We are on a fishing excursion bound for Dundee and Stanley Island. You have no time to go through our baggage, for Hunting-ton, where we change cars, is only a mile

A Personally Conducted Tour.

distant. Now, come in and look us over. There is nothing at all suspicious about our appearance. We are hungry, though. You see we wouldn't even smuggle an American breakfast into Canada."

They passed through the car—the customs-officer and the "Personal Conductor." "There is nothing of a dutiable nature among your baggage, I suppose," said the congenial officer, who was clever enough to appreciate the situation.

"Oh, none whatever. We are only on pleasure bent, as you can see," replied the "Conductor"; "and if you will join us at the Island next week we can promise you a fish dinner, caught with good Yankee tackle."

The officer and the "Conductor" could not suppress their smiles, prompted by the ill-concealed expressions of surprise and even disappointment on the faces of the party, because of the failure of the officer

A Personally Conducted Tour.

to make the much-heralded search for smuggled articles which might chance to be hid away among their trunks and hand-bags.

Before the guests had an opportunity to recover from the unusual tactics employed by the "easy boss," Huntington was reached. Here a change of cars was necessary, also a transfer of the baggage to another railroad station. An hour and a half of time was the required wait for the Grand Trunk train from Montreal to carry us the remaining twenty miles of our journey by rail to Dundee and the Salmon River, where we would embark on the little steamer known as Smallman's Boat; then threading our way down the strangely interesting, winding river a distance of four miles, we would reach the St. Lawrence, and the Algonquin Hotel on Stanley Island, our destination.

The "Doc" and the "Conductor," fearing

A Personally Conducted Tour.

that the time had come for a reckoning on the lost breakfast aboard the train, be-stirred themselves upon alighting at the Huntington station. A large 'bus was at once procured—which, by the way, had been one of the old-time New York Broadway 'buses, and how it found its way up into that undiscovered country still remains a mystery to the company of New Yorkers who imagined that they themselves were the first to penetrate the confines of its sacred primitiveness.

The guests boarded the 'bus supposedly to be driven over to the other station. The "Doc" aside, however, gave the driver instructions to take them to a hotel which he named. Arriving there, the landlady, Mrs. Moirs (who enjoys a popularity and a reputation as a competent and jovial hostess which is not altogether local in its publicity), prepared breakfast.

"I have everything in waiting for you,"

A Personally Conducted Tour.

she explained. "I received your telegram from Malone. It just gave me time to have breakfast ready for you. If you all sit right down you will not need to hurry for the train."

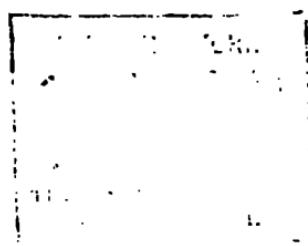
The expression of pleased surprise on the faces of the tourists assured the "Conductor" as he came in after having the baggage transferred, that he would not be discharged until at least a graver offense had been committed. Aboard the train again after partaking of a good breakfast, the pleasure-seekers were in an amiable frame of mind, and good-natured jests were exchanged among them, the "Doc" and the "Conductor" making an accommodating target for everything sent in their direction.

The last twenty miles of railroading passed quickly. Alighting at the railroad terminus, the "Conductor" was informed that the small steamer which had for many

A Personally Conducted Tour.

years run daily trips from the landing here to the Islands (our destination), had been discontinued. This was a staggering disappointment to the "Conductor." The trip down the circuitous Salmon River with old Captain Alex, who can point within a few inches of exactness to the whereabouts of the logs buried in the channel, that menace the safety of the flanges of the propeller screw,—this part of the programme, I explained to my friends, we should have to omit for the present.

Our company were greatly amused when told by some of the villagers that the alert hotel proprietor on Stanley Island had anticipated the difficulties which would beset our way after reaching Dundee, and had sent a small flotilla of rowboats to meet us, but mistaking the date of our coming, the guides had been patrolling the Salmon River all the day previous, looking for a





"We chose to ride in a large covered wagon."

A Personally Conducted Tour.

lost party of tourists from New York, bound for Stanley Island.

The heralding of our coming had been well sounded, and although disappointed in the discontinuance of our means of transportation, we had suggestions made to us of many interesting and novel methods of conveyance to the Island. We chose to ride in a large covered wagon. This seemed to us to admit of the best possibilities, so we started on our four-mile pilgrimage through the marshes which lay between the St. Lawrence and the Dundee landing, following as near as possible the banks of the winding Salmon River, our objective point being Taillon's Inn, on the south bank of the St. Lawrence. From there we were to engage row-boats and be taken across to the hotel on Stanley Island, a distance of two miles farther.

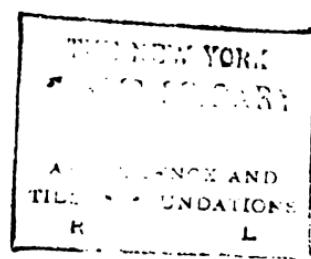
The driver of our covered van was a citizen of the town and an old schoolmate of

A Personally Conducted Tour.

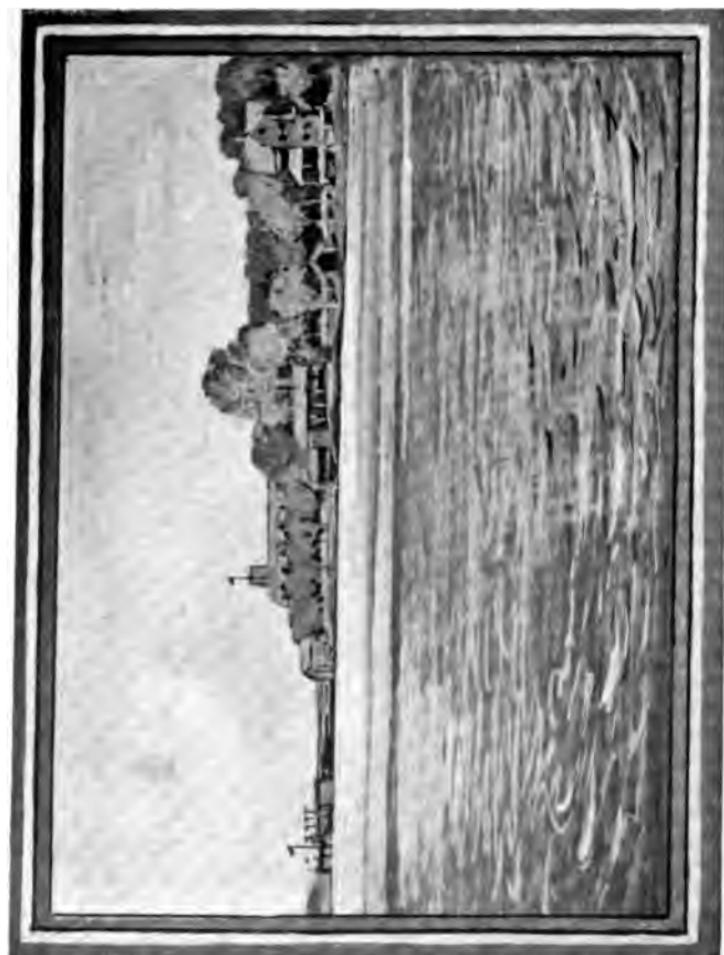
the "Conductor." His localisms in speech, together with the items of gossip retailed for the benefit of his old friend, amused the wagon-load of passengers until the marshes were reached.

Already a contented quiet had seized upon my guests. The unusual method by which they were being carried along had escaped their notice. The rattle and roar of the express train had given place to the slow, jolting noises of the wagon; the banging of the gongs on the New York street cars, and the thundering of the overhead railroads of the great city, were replaced by the intense quiet of the low-lying marshes across which we were threading our way.

The corduroy road over which the wagon bumped regularly was raised above the level of the marshy flats a few feet, and water stood to the depth of several inches, hidden by a thick growth of marshy grass; while here and there a clump of willows or



"We came into full view of the large imposing hotel."



A Personally Conducted Tour.

of cranberry bushes disturbed what else would be a vast meadow of gracefully waving wild grasses.

The restful, sacred quiet which had settled upon our party was broken only by the occasional flapping of a marsh hen as it scudded through the water rushes, frightened by the approach of the wagon. The farm hands, poling hay to the ricks, stood ankle deep in water, resting their arms akimbo, making vain attempts at recognizing the strangers riding in the hotel wagon. Fishermen in flat-bottomed boats, fishing in the creeks which we crossed, lay down their poles and excused the liberty they took of gazing at us by making fruitless efforts to light the tobacco in their old stubs of clay pipes, which had hopelessly burned to ashes hours before.

The fascinating wonders of Arcadia began to show their influence upon the guests. A contented quiet had fallen upon the com-

A Personally Conducted Tour.

pany. The "Conductor" already saw the successful beginning of what proved to be the most enjoyable two weeks' vacation ever spent by any member of his party.

The marshes crossed, the mighty St. Lawrence now came into view. At Taillon's Point a sufficient number of skiffs were taken; then in single file over the two-mile expanse of water, clear, calm, and of a turquoise-blue, our Indian guides paddled us across the channel, till around the eastern end of the beautiful Stanley Island we came into full view of the large, imposing hotel, which from the riverside is truly a magnificent sight. In honor of our coming a large American flag floated out over the water from the pier, and as we passed under it and made the landing, with one accord a rousing cheer was sent up for "The Conductor."

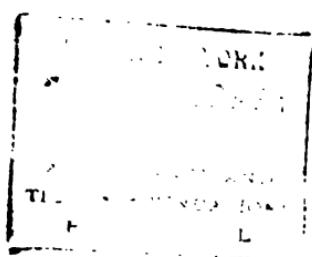
O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

41039B





"Old Mother Bartholdi, who stands with her lighted torch on Bedloe's Island, a guiding beacon for the traveler upon the deep."





O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

IT was late in September, and the season at the Castleton Hotel was on. Once a year, at least, the Castleton, which majestically crowns the steep bluff overlooking New York Harbor from Staten Island, is chosen by many as the last stop on the homeward-bound Summer route of pleasure. They are reluctant to admit that the joys of a season just spent in the mountains, seashore or country have come to an end for the year, and many lovers of the

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

freedom of country life, enthusiasts over health-giving athletic sports, linger for a month or two here at the Castleton on the very threshold of America's greatest city, regretting that so soon they must begin again the exacting duties of the treadmill of society.

Among those who were enjoying the hospitality of the well-appointed hotel were Mr. O'Reilly and his friends Andy Coe and Sidney Graham. They formed what O'Reilly was pleased to term "The Board of Strategy" for the guests. O'Reilly had spent the first two evenings in "giving the girls a treat," by which he meant only that he had not found the opportunity of being presented.

"Now, boys," began O'Reilly, in his usual suave manner, making a little speech to his companions on the "campstool" deck of the Saturday morning ferry-boat to the city. "Ahem!" And the boys knew

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

his remarks were to be out of the ordinary. He drew up his forearm, and with an easy gesture continued :

“I have had a talk with the head waiter (colored) this morning and I can see where I will be very busy this evening. Ahem! (loudly).” Andy had been so indiscreet as to allow his attention to be diverted toward a large man-of-war just entering port. Apologies made and accepted, O'Reilly resumed :

“The fact is, fellows, we are going to have a dance and a cake-walk to-night, and the dance is to follow the cake-walk. Now at the present stage of the game I'm not acquainted with one of those beautiful girls I see around the hotel parlors, and you know for me not to be 'in it' at the dance would be against O'Reilly's principles. So I have arranged it with the head waiter to boss the cake-walk. I told him that the three of us were experienced

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

in the cake-walk business and we would make this the biggest thing of the season.

"So you both better come home early and we'll hold a meeting of the 'Board of Strategy.' We three are to be judges, and I never saw a cake-walk in my life. The less we know about it the better the —ah—the—impression, don't you know, we'll create. And remember! before the dance begins I've got to be on speaking terms with the ladies."

O'Reilly, fondly called by his associates "The Prince," is not of Scotch parentage; neither does his descent savor of garlic or sauerkraut. The Emerald Isle, even, cannot claim the distinction of being his birthplace. Dundee, however strangely it may strike the reader, is the town where O'Reilly packed his clothes and said good-bye ten years ago. Dundee, Canada—names suggestive of good stock and a healthful climate—is on the northern slope

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

of the Adirondacks, where it is swept by Winter's frosty gales for six months of the year, and for the rest gently fanned by health-giving zephyrs, perfumed by the cloverfields and green pastures across which they are wafted.

There O'Reilly first communed with nature. There he wooed her with innocent gentleness, with a kindness which made him a favored pupil in the school taught by the goddesses of health and beauty; and when, at the age of twenty, he was graduated from that institute and came among his fellow men to fight the battles of life, he was fortified with a healthy mind, a happy disposition, an affable manner, a handsome face and an athletic figure. Why, then, should not O'Reilly be chosen as the boss of the cake-walk?

O'Reilly's injunction to his friends to return early that day was unnecessary. Saturday afternoon during the Summer

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

months is hailed by the heads of firms and by the office boys alike with childish enthusiasm, and when the half-holiday approaches and the hour is reached for closing, hundreds of thousands of eager, pushing people throng the railroad stations, the ferry houses and the piers of the steamboat companies. and in an incredibly short space of time are on their way to Summer homes in the country or friends at the seashore. O'Reilly and his comrades found themselves at their hotel in time for mid-day lunch.

O'Reilly jocularly remarked, as the head waiter and two of his assistants seated them at the table and ostentatiously brushed away the imaginary crumbs from the immaculately clean table linen: "Fellows, the judges have came."

Since the honor had been conferred upon O'Reilly to referee the performance of the cake-walkers he became most anxious to

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

get from his tailor a new Tuxedo coat which he had specially designed himself, with privileges to his tailor, as he explained, to allow his friends President McKinley and the Prince of Wales to have duplicates if they so desired.

The coat he should have received by messenger at the ferry slip, but up to the time the boat started no messenger or coat had arrived. O'Reilly begged to be excused from a trolley-car ride to Midland Beach, which his two friends had suggested for whiling away the afternoon, giving as an excuse that he should not enjoy the outing while in such suspense regarding the Tuxedo.

Two things, he regretted very much, would certainly have to happen should the coat not arrive. One was that the cake-walk would have to be postponed, and the other that he should have to withdraw the courtesy he had heretofore extended to his friend Wales of allowing the tailor

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

to make an occasional suit for him also.

One of O'Reilly's idiosyncracies—which his friends well understood and which went a long way in explaining his spontaneous popularity—was that in his amusing references to the exclusiveness of his tailor (who, by the way, he informed his friends, carried on his business in Hoboken to avoid the rush and likewise the Broadway prices for rent) he never allowed the impression to remain that this common person "Money," with whom many find it necessary to associate, was anything more to him than a mere passing acquaintance.

They met and passed each other, as O'Reilly explained it, at his place of business, on the first and fifteenth of each month. He and this fellow "Money," he said, in fact saw very little of each other. "But then," continued O'Reilly, "most people think I'm on intimate terms with 'Mr. Money,' and as long as I don't ask

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

for an introduction they are no wiser and will remain my friends for a much longer time."

O'Reilly's two friends returned from the beach rather late for dinner, and while hurrying down the corridor passed his room. They halted outside the door to hear his musical voice declaiming to an imaginary audience after this style:

"Not one, my lord. Besides, it should appear, that, if he had the present money to discharge the Jew, he would not take it."

"That settles it," remarked Andy. "He's got his coat and I'm mighty glad of it. He's been romancing about it for a year. Let's go in, Graham, and see him."

Opening the door suddenly, they found O'Reilly pacing slowly up and down the short length of his room. Turning to face his callers with an undisturbed manner, he began a little piece of acting which was

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

really a counterpart of Mansfield's "Beau Brummel."

"Friends," he said, with a majestic wave of the hand, "in the absence of 'my man,' who should announce your arrival, I greet you! and bid you welcome into the sanctity of my abode; and, gentlemen, happy am I that I cherish toward you sentiments which inspire me not to say, as did my friend William upon another occasion when he remarked: 'And 'twere not for thy hoary beard, the hand of Marmion had not spared to cleave the Douglas' head.'

"Go hence, I say," (and O'Reilly pulled himself up to his full height, his clean-shaven, classic features, crowned by a wavy growth of prematurely gray, almost white, hair, making a distinguished picture of a Ciceronian orator), "and to thyself take a clean collar and make thee ready for the cake-walk, for there O'Reilly will await thee."

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

Graham, turning and taking Andy by the arm, made for the door, both breaking into a guffaw which resounded the full length of the building. Then they stopped in front of their rooms and looked back to hear O'Reilly say:—

“ You Indians! Get a move on you.”

The dinner over, the fashionables of the Castleton assembled in the prettily lighted dance hall, which is also used each evening in the week as a music room. In companies of three and four the guests gather and while music is discoursed by the orchestra the day's events are retold in pleasant gossip.

On this Saturday evening the incandescent lights seemed to burn brighter than usual as they shone from the closely-dotted line in the frieze down the sides and across the end of the glass extension to the Castleton overhanging the cliff, looking out on the waters of the Harbor. Now

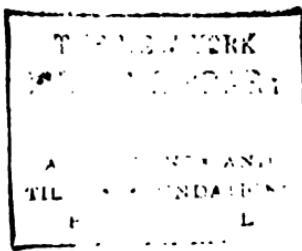
O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

and then from the end windows could be heard the warning toll of the bell on the buoy anchored over Cataract Shoals, mournfully bewailing the monotony of its estate. Again, as a pair of romantic lovers stood hand in hand, gazing out into the night from the half-open windows, absorbed in a happiness admired even by the unsympathetic spinster, the old St. George's light on Robin's reef considerably closed one eye and faintly blinked the other to encourage Cupid in his laudable enterprise.

Farther in the distance loomed grand old New York with its "sky scrapers" piled up against the clouds of night, at rest for a few hours. Each evening, in silent contemplation, the devotees of this enchanting glass-house sit and gaze into the darkness of the bay, across which an ever-changing panoramic fleet of lights flits here and there, dodging each other in a seemingly reckless manner, awed only by the reprov-



"Farther in the distance loomed grand old New York with its 'sky scrapers' piled up against the clouds of night."





O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

ing frown of Old Mother Bartholdi, who stands with her lighted torch on Bedloe's Island, a guiding beacon for the traveler upon the deep.

The guests of the hotel and the onlookers from the near-by cottages had filed into the hall, occupying the seats ranged along the sides of the oblong room and across the lower end which faced the bay. The extra illumination furnished by the management and the decorated coat lapels of the colored bell-boys and porters had already created the impression that "doin's of extraordinary importance was about to take place." They had not long to wait for developments.

Coe and Graham had taken places in the front row, Graham recognizing among those near him a lady and gentleman of his acquaintance who remarked that they were regular patrons of the resort and were well acquainted with many of the

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

guests. Graham and Andy were busy explaining what was about to take place, when suddenly the band broke loose in an opening march.

At the same moment, emerging from a side entrance, came the cake-walkers. They stood in confusion, directly facing the gathering. O'Reilly, alive to the occasion, walked toward them from the musician's stand, and, bowing and smiling with an unmistakable air of authority, welcomed all in turn by shaking hands and assigning each to a position at the other side of the room, wafting them along by well-trained gestures and polite words of encouragement.

The cake-walkers safely landed in the least conspicuous corner, O'Reilly hurried back to consult with his colleagues, Coe and Graham, who arose as he approached them.

"There's nothing doing yet, fellows,"

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

reported O'Reilly. "But I don't like the way the coon with the red satin vest has been taking me in. Perhaps he thinks I want to steal his business."

"Better look out, O'Reilly," said Graham. "He may have a razor in each pocket."

At this stage in the proceedings the band, which had blown itself out of breath, stopped to make a fresh start.

As O'Reilly returned to the music stand he was met by an officious personage who had strolled in from the outer office, assuming a proprietary air and a bored expression. He halted O'Reilly. They held a short consultation, and O'Reilly came back to his friends in the front row.

"Graham," said O'Reilly, "I'm sorry, old man, but you're out of it. This new chap is looking for trouble and I've had to put him in your place as a judge to keep peace in the family."

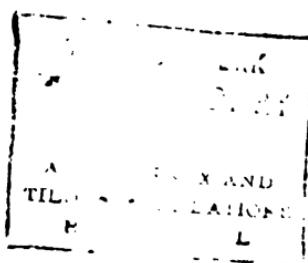
"Don't think of me, go on with the

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

show," smilingly remarked Graham; and O'Reilly returned at once with Andy to the platform prepared for the judges.

O'Reilly politely stepped aside and bowed his brother judges to the stand. Then, squaring himself to the audience, he was about to announce that the entertainment would begin, when he was interrupted by one of the cake-walkers who came side-stepping toward him in a suspicious manner, O'Reilly retreating meanwhile. At this exhibition the audience laughed heartily.

With a sudden, suspicious movement, which O'Reilly mistook for a dive for his razor, the gorgeously attired individual shot a visiting card into close proximity to O'Reilly's optics. Then he chassed around in a semi-circle while O'Reilly read the card. It contained, aside from a photograph of the distinguished gentleman, these lines—"Professor A. L. Tut Tut, the Champion Cake-Walker of the World, having de-





"'Why!" said O'Reilly, "Professor, I'm delighted, *de-lighted*, I assure you."

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

feated one hundred and fourteen couples in a cake-walk, held in Madison Square Garden, New York City."

"Why!" said O'Reilly. "Professor, I'm delighted, *de-lighted*, I assure you."

"Ye—yaas sir, I taut you'd be. You jus' s'cuse me fer a minnit. I'll done make de speech." And he bowed O'Reilly back toward the music stand.

By this time the audience was enjoying the side plays hugely.

"But, Professor," insisted O'Reilly, "I must introduce you to the audience. Then you can give them your talk afterward."

"That's all right, boss, but I'se goin' ter make dat speech, 'member!" spoke up the Professor.

"Ladies and gentlemen," began O'Reilly, "I have the honor of introducing to you our distinguished guest of the evening, Professor A. L. Tut Tut, who, I may say"—

"That's nuff, that's plenty," broke in

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

the colored gentleman. "I begin right dar."

O'Reilly took his seat on the judges' stand, and the Professor continued:

"Ladies and gemmen, I am de orig'nal what 'vented de cake-walk, an' I done bury all de coons wot I been up 'gainst." And the Professor stuck out his chest, and held his silk tile tenderly over his solar plexus, while the audience laughed.

"I furder wish to state dat I'se too warm a proposition to be 'lowed in dis yer amatoor p'formance." The crowd thought he looked it and cheered again.

"My frien' Cut-em-deep Johnson requested me for to come down yer and cut de cake-walkers loose. Yaas, sah," and he smiled a broad smile, "dat's wot I'll do, cut 'em loose, sah!"

Then, turning, Tut Tut came for the judges' stand, his bell-shaped, tan-colored silk hat over his arm, prancing up and

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

down, with legs and arms swinging around like the fan-shaped propellers of a wind-mill. Facing the audience, the Professor introduced the judges, as follows:

"Ladies and gemmen, dese am de judges—de judges—understand I'se de director. The first gent on the right, wid de gray hair, am de president of dis yere 'sociation, Mister O'Reilly. Besides bein' a star, he is de gov'nor of Rhode Island. De next on de bench am a friend ob his. He ain't very big but he am a heap bigger'n he looks. An' de third gent, the one on de end, am a winner. He done tole me outside he own a trust bank in de biggest building on Broadway, an' he got money to burn."

O'Reilly went over and shook hands with his newly made acquaintance of banking fame. "I am very glad," he said, "to know we have a man of your importance on this committee. I fear we may have occasion to test your generosity."



O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

He then advanced to the front of the stage and ordered Tut Tut to "trot 'em out." The walk began. The Professor marshalled his couples in line. Then, at the stroke of the music, still facing his command, he slid backward on his toes, one foot extended far out behind, the while holding his beribboned staff on the level of his head with both hands, a most remarkable feat, thoroughly appreciated by the spectators. Around the hall the procession moved. The mixture of dress combinations could not be equalled in a varicolored kaleidoscope. At each corner Tut Tut bounded into the air and pirouetted a couple of times before touching the floor again.

The first round of the hall completed, O'Reilly, pacing to and fro across the end of the stage, the silk brocaded collar and wide expanse of cuffs to his "wonder" of a Tuxedo coat showing to good advan-

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

tage and effect, ordered: "Take 'em around again, Tut Tut, then we'll cut 'em down."

The performance was repeated, Tut Tut varying his gyrations at each turn.

Lining them up again, O'Reilly singled out promiscuously two-thirds of the candidates, and bade them step out of the contest.

This was an unpopular moment for O'Reilly, but true to the traditions of the nationality to which he belongs, he quickly repaired the damage done. Among those dismissed happened to be Mr. Cut-em-deep Johnson, the friend of the Professor, and the champion cake-walker of New Jersey.

A small riot immediately developed in the corner over the first decision made. Tut Tut, even, rebelled at such a gross exhibition of ignorance on the part of the judge and Gov'nor of Rhode Island. O'Reilly, placing one hand in his trousers' pocket, and wearing a deprecating smile,

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

walked over to the group surrounding Tut Tut and Cut-'em-deep Johnson. He addressed them, thus:

“Gentlemen, there is no occasion for this little exhibition on your part. We, the judges, are well aware of the superiority of the walking you have done. You have already shown that you have outclassed your associates. My friend, you are entitled to a distinction which we cannot extend to your less favored competitors. Won't you allow me the privilege of introducing you to my friend the banker? You are entitled to a chance to separate him from his money.”

Happiness again restored, O'Reilly mounted the platform and once more instructed the Professor to “trot 'em out” again by twos, each couple taking a side of the hall. Following out this plan, O'Reilly was successful in bringing the contestants down to two couples, and also in

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

carrying with him the approval of the spectators. The banker-judge had settled the differences between Cut-em-deep Johnson and the judges, and all attention was now centered on the two remaining couples.

One of these couples was a professional pair from Thompson Street, New York. They were tall, black and graceful. It was evident they had walked in many cake-walks. The other two were younger and shorter in stature. The girl was a pretty "yaller gal," simply dressed. Her companion was the waiter who served O'Reilly and his two friends at table. These two couples had passed singly and together up and down the hall many times.

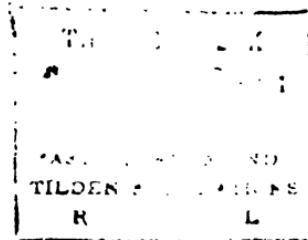
It was evident to O'Reilly that a close decision would be necessary, and his knowledge of cake-walking could not serve him in good stead, so he hit upon a plan. After

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

consulting with Tut Tut, O'Reilly laid his scheme before the audience.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began. "I find it impossible for me to make a disinterested decision. Beauty in the gentler sex strongly appeals to my consideration, and, as these two lady contestants have been generously dealt with in that respect by nature, I have the permission of my associate judges to ask that the audience help us make the decision. Now in order to show you that you are at liberty to exercise your best judgment, I will add that there will be a prize for each. The cake goes to the first choice, and my friend, the banker here, offers a prize of five dollars to the second choice. I am correct in making that statement, am I not, Mr.—ah—"

"Oh, yes," replied the self-elected judge, and he bowed his reply to O'Reilly. It was the first he had heard of the arrangement, but the advertisement he was getting





"Next came the innocent, simple-mannered and pretty 'yaller gal' and George, her companion."

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

pleased him, and he was willing to foot the bill.

"The contestants will pass down the hall," continued O'Reilly. "On their return walk the spectators will indicate their favorites by handclapping. The couple over whom the greatest demonstration is made will be the winners."

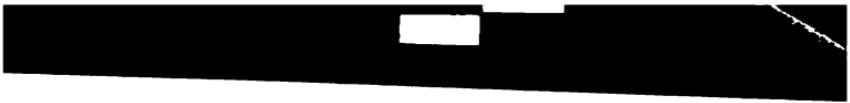
The tall couple from Thompson Street led the way. Their most fetching smiles, graceful turns and bows were executed, and the spectators were very liberal with their applause. Next came the innocent, simple-mannered and pretty "yaller gal" and George, her companion, who looked toward the judges' stand for encouragement. George kissed his hand to O'Reilly before he started to do his last stunt for glory and the cake. O'Reilly gave him an assuring nod, then he was off.

The first move he made won him the take. Gently clasping his "yaller" sweet-

O'Reilly at the Cake-Walk.

heart in his arms, he earnestly kissed her on the cheek, then started down the hall. The crowd started with him. Applause and pandemonium reigned. The cake was handed to George and his girl by a hundred willing hands. In the midst of the hysterical display of handclapping, laughter and continuous babel of talk, Tut Tut mounted the platform and proposed three cheers for O'Reilly, which were given by the most appreciative audience that had ever assembled in the glass-house on the cliff.

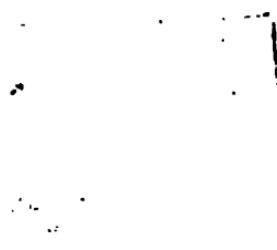
Well, how about the dance? Was O'Reilly "in it"? Was he? Just ask some of the girls who were there!



The Larchmont Commuters.



1





"At a 'Smoker' in one of New York's clubs, four bachelors lounged at a refreshment table."



The Larchmont Commuters.

CHAPTER I.

THE SCHEME IS LAID.

EARLY in June, at a "Smoker" in one of New York's clubs, four bachelors lounged at a refreshment table beneath the wreathing smoke of fragrant Havanas. They were occupied principally in passing disparaging remarks over the frantic efforts being made by the sketch artists who had

The Larchmont Commuters.

been engaged to provide the evening's entertainment.

"I am weary and disgusted with all this sort of thing, boys," said Andy Muir, who composed one of the group of four. Now Andy enjoyed the distinction of being the smallest member of the Club in height, and also in the matter of avoirdupois. In subjects under discussion, however, Andy's "say" weighed as much as that of the biggest. He had many other distinguishing traits which also were well known to his intimates. For instance, he had successfully weathered the persistent attacks made upon his sentimental heart-strings during many previous Summers by the bewitching females of his acquaintance, and he still clung to the independence and quiet of his comfortable bachelor apartments, with a tenacity which had weakened the resolve of many a designing mamma.

"Now," says he, "what's the matter with

The Larchmont Commuters.

the four of us getting out into the country where we can have rest and quiet at night, and come in to business in the morning refreshed, feeling like a lot of thoroughbred two-year-olds,—eh? I tell you, there's nothing like it, boys. Fresh air, plenty of sleep, no society demands, lie in the hammock and smoke on the veranda every evening after dinner. Now, what do you say? Let's hunt up a quiet place and move away from all this kind of nonsense. And the sooner you say *move* the better it will suit me."

"Well, hear the boy talk! He means it, though," drawled out Fred Tracy (Andy's room-mate).

"Sit on the veranda and smoke, eh! Lie in the hammock and rest! What! In Larchmont? Well, I don't think! Andy, you're 'way off." This remark came from Berry Harper, "The Kid."

"How about that, Graham?" put in

The Larchmont Commuters.

Andy again, addressing the fourth member of the party. "Got enough grit in you to say you'll go?"

"Certainly I'm going, my boy," replied Graham. "You couldn't count me out of that dream of blissful quiet and undisturbed serenity. You can paint me in your picture as the man in the hammock. Just select the place, Andy, and I will follow you anywhere you wish to go for a month, and Larchmont will suit me as well as the next place; but for a month only, remember! After that, though, I shall expect you to come with me on my annual fishing trip up to my cottage on the St. Lawrence."

"Well then, fellows, Larchmont first, and Canada is too far off to interfere with the present plans." With this remark Andy said he would look up the advertisements in the daily papers, and before the next Sunday, which would be a week hence;

The Larchmont Commuters.

the day being pleasant, then, a ride to Larchmont on their bicycles (twenty miles) would be just a short exercising spin. This the four readily agreed to. Berry casually remarked that he had a porous tire, but as he usually rode with the back wheel only in condition, it didn't make much difference about the front wheel. Fred reminded Andy that his wheel was at a repair shop up in Harlem, and had been since the previous Autumn, when he had interfered with a builder's mortar bin on the street in front of a new house and smashed his front wheel.

"Now, Fred, just to show what you would come to if I didn't keep tabs on you. Your wheel has been in the basement at our apartments all Winter, and you paid for the repairs in the bill for extras I handed you at the time."

"Now, there he goes again, boys. Why, bless my soul, Andy! you are getting

The Larchmont Commuters.

worse all the time. You wouldn't have every day a Sunday if you could."

"Well, so long, boys, and good night." Berry and Graham took a cab across town for home. The outing plan had been arranged.

CHAPTER II.

THE RIDE TO LARCHMONT.

THE plan as agreed upon was to meet on the plaza in front of the hotel in which Sidney Graham lived, on the following Sunday morning. So, according to this schedule, and after taking up their last man, the quartette pedalled at a reckless speed down the Avenue to the Grand Central Depot, Berry leading the mad dash. The four lined up in the baggage-room of the depot, making a noise resembling a lot of stable boys attempting to quell a stamp-

The Larchmont Commuters.

pede among a dozen frightened Missouri mules.

"Whoa, there, Mr. Baggageman," Andy called out. "Got a place for these bicycles? We're going to Mount Vernon."

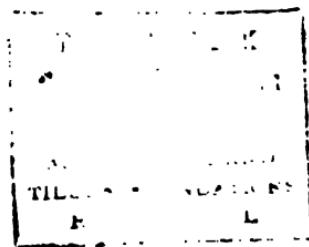
"Can't get 'em on this train. It starts in two minutes, and it requires five minutes to tag them."

"Well, it won't take that long to-day," remarked Andy to the surprised employee.

Berry took the tip from Andy. "Why, cert! We catch that train," and suiting his action to the words, he shouldered his bike, jumped over the checking counter, and with a whoop led the 100-yard dash along the platform to the baggage-car, Fred sarcastically remarking to the station hands that the baggageman would really have to excuse them, and wouldn't they tell him to try and find other congenial company who might appreciate his kind invitation to remain longer with him.



"He shouldered his bike, jumped over the checking counter,
and * * * led the 100-yard dash to the baggage-car."





The Larchmont Commuters.

Andy's schedule, as he explained it to the boys after they had seated themselves conveniently, if not comfortably, upon the newsboy's paper trays and peanut baskets in the baggage-car, was to ride upon the train as far as Mount Vernon, at that suburban town to remount and ride into Larchmont Manor, arriving there in time for dinner. This suited the amiable juveniles, who were acting as though they had but just been turned loose from a boarding school where they had been kept in "close bounds" for a whole term. Berry had appropriated two bananas, and Fred and he improvised a street band. They then treated the other occupants of the baggage-car to an impromptu concert, using the bananas as a picolo and a trombone. The arrival at Mount Vernon, in the midst of the entertainment, interrupted the rendering of any more numbers on their programme.

The Larchmont Commuters.

The hot Summer sun beat down upon the four wheelmen as they climbed up the steep hill at the station. Andy, the active and agile, trotted up the incline in advance, mounted his wheel and rode off in the direction of Larchmont. Graham reached the top a little short of breath and entered a complaint about the inconsiderateness of the sun, then struck out after Andy. Berry had remarked to Fred as they trundled their wheels together up the hill that his bike was acting very "queer." When they reached the level and tried to follow, Berry found that he was riding on the rim of his wheel. His tire was flat.

"Dog'on the luck!" says Berry. "Hold on, Fred, I'm busted. I rode over that street-car track back there and I felt as though I had fallen on my face."

"Well," says Fred, "throw your old wheel away. Here's a bicycle shop. We'll get trusted for a new one. We haven't any

The Larchmont Commuters.

money, but we can put up a mighty good front."

"Sure Mike," says Berry, "let's tell him who we are." The proprietor of the bicycle shop told them that all they needed was a new tire, so he was set to work immediately.

Andy and Graham had wheeled to a point in the road where it divided, and thinking that if they went farther they might lose the tardy members of the party, sat down to await them on the porch of an unoccupied house. After a watch of about ten minutes, the delinquents not putting in an appearance, Andy became nervous.

"Now, I know what's the matter," says he. "It's Fred; I know it. He's broken the forks to his wheel, run over a dog and lost his nose-glasses, or there's some scrape he's into. I never went out with him yet but that I had to carry him back in

The Larchmont Commuters.

pieces. I'll go back and look for them."

"All right, Andy," said Graham (who was glad of a chance to keep in a shady place). "You'll find me right here when you come this way again." Graham stretched himself at full length on the floor of the porch and congratulated himself with the thought of an extra loaf. Finally he decided that reclining, supporting his weight on the pointed angle of his elbow on the bare floor, was not the snap he imagined. So, tiring of his idleness, he mounted his wheel and joined in the hunt also. He found it unnecessary to make inquiries. Approaching the bicycle store, he saw a crowd of small boys and loungers blocking the entrance to the store, while Andy stood on the walk, his face wearing an expression of extreme disgust.

"What's up, Andy?" Graham inquired.

"Oh, those 'kids' are giving a continuous vaudeville in there. The next thing that's

The Larchmont Commuters.

going to happen is that they'll get 'pulled.' That'll be a pretty how-de-do." Graham saw that Andy had lost his patience, so *he* goes to the door.

"Hello, Graham, old chap!" says Fred. "Come in and see the motor carriage we are having made. Berry and I are going to 'kill off' you two fellows on the run over there. There won't be enough left of you by dinner-time for one napkin to cover. Where's the boy, Graham?" (meaning Andy).

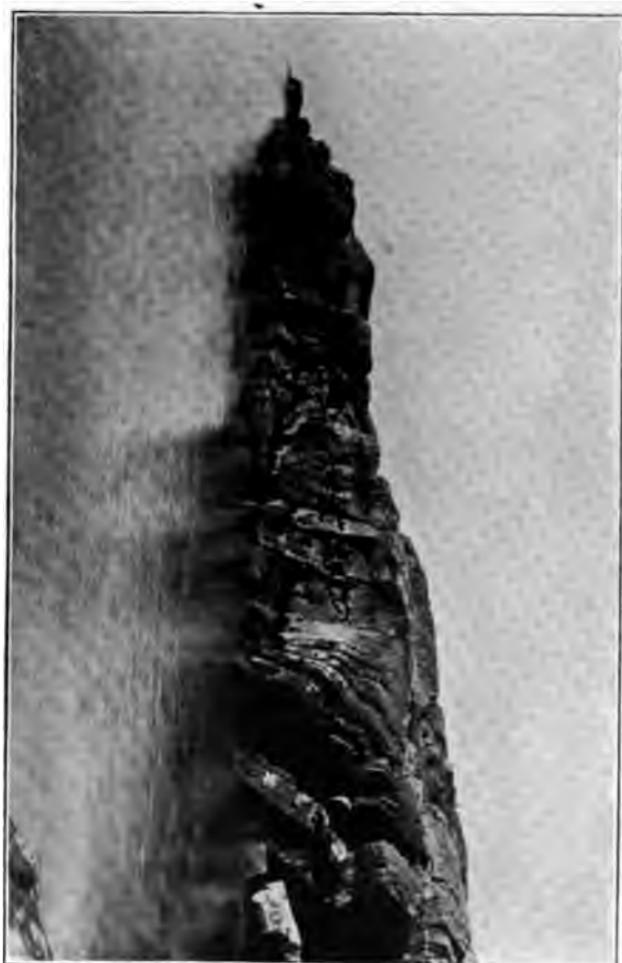
"He's out there looking for a cop to have you fellows arrested for disturbing the peace, so you had better move your stand."

"Hello, Graham, old sport!" says Berry, as he finished delivering a short speech in Irish dialect to an admiring audience, on the family troubles of Mrs. McFadden. "Give Andy my compliments, and tell him that we want to introduce him to a few of our friends in here. Tell him not to be

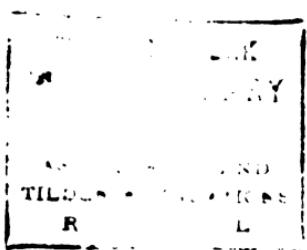
The Larchmont Commuters.

bashful, but to come right up on the stage." At this point in the proceedings the new tire was in position and the quartette made another start. This time it proved a go, and they were off to Larchmont.

Now, it must be understood at the outset, by the readers of this hopelessly dislocated attempt at narration, for which humble apologies are made, that one of the express purposes of the outing planned for the month was a relaxation of mind and body, a retreat from the diverting noises and alluring temptations encroaching upon their time, rest, sleep and opportunities for meditation. Andy hoped to realize on a theory he had of "perfect quiet and rest." Graham thought he could see opportunities to hide himself away among the steep-shelving rocks along the shore at Larchmont, and there commune with nature and woo the muse for an inspiration which would give him an original interpretation of an



"The steep-shelving rocks along the shore at Larchmont."





The Larchmont Commuters.

old subject, and consequently be an excuse for putting another short story on the market at an expense to himself and the much-abused public.

Fred, the erratic, the uncertain quantity in the matter of details, an admirer of the beautiful, and a student of nature, had submitted to the plan of spending a month at Larchmont simply because the season of the year had come around when something of the sort was usually done, and he was content to go along with his friends and await the events of interest which might turn up.

Berry made no pretenses at carrying out any impracticable hobbies which may or may not have taken an explainable form in his brain. His remark to Fred was: "We will see how they are running after we move up there." Andy, as the prime mover of the undertaking, of a necessity had to assume the responsible

The Larchmont Commuters.

rôle, and his duties began on the Sunday exploring trip we are now engaged discussing.

CHAPTER III.

THE BICYCLE RIDE.

THE relentless heat of the burning sun bore down upon the bicyclers as they worked their passage uphill, then along the narrow margin of roadway which had been left for use between the trolley tracks in course of construction on the one hand, and an embankment of dirt thrown up on the opposite side from the excavating for a sewer-pipe. Miles of such discouragement

The Larchmont Commuters.

lined the roadway from Mount Vernon to Larchmont.

Graham was riding a new wheel which, he said earlier in the day, he had bought for just such an outing. It weighed nearly thirty pounds and was geared to 102. He had not ridden a bicycle before in many months, nor used any other method of exercising, so that in his herculean effort to make a favorable impression as to his athletic ability among his friends, who, he was well aware, were all bent upon the same foolish mission, his enthusiasm for his new wheel was quickly evaporating. What with the narrow escapes he had with his life, or from fractured limbs caused by unexpected "headers" into the trench dug for the trolley tracks, and continuous miles of hill-climbing, pushing the discouraging gear of 102, the while trailing a block in the rear of the other heartless "scorchers," dazed by the heat and glare of the sun, cov-

The Larchmont Commuters.

ered with dust and wet with perspiration, no wonder it was when Graham overtook his friends that he inquired:

“Say, Andy, is this a fair sample of what you purpose to provide daily in order to realize on your ‘Rest and Quiet’ theory? Because if it is, I will request my lawyer to prepare a few lines in regard to certain bequests, etc., to my family, which it might be awkward for my executors to settle after I had ceased to be able to pedal this lovely ‘bike.’”

“Why, what’s the matter, old man?” they all chimed in chorus.

“You don’t mean to say you are hot or ‘done up,’ do you?” queried Andy.

They were a very sorry looking lot who tried to impress Graham with how much they still had “up their sleeve.” Fred was as pale as the brown coating of road dirt upon his face would allow him to be. His cheeks were lined off in stripes, resembling

The Larchmont Commuters.

in appearance a new hard-wood floor, by the perspiration which had coursed down his classic features. Berry Harper's long straight hair hung in reckless abandon over his forehead and shaded his eyes, and the liquidized result of his overtaxed energies fell in frequent drops from his saturated locks. Bareheaded, he carried his cap clasped around the handle-bar of his bicycle. Andy was making a desperate effort to prove to the others that the ride had only been a short practice spin for him, and that the morning had been all that could have been desired. In this condition the quartette wheeled into the yards of the Bevan House, Larchmont, and called for dinner.

CHAPTER IV.

PERSONALITIES.

STRANGE, indeed, is it that we are often led by our enthusiasm to accept unnatural conditions, and are able to see them through our exaggerated mind's eye in almost any light we have pictured our dream to be; but the delusion cannot be a lasting one. Former habits, tastes, customs and surroundings, any one of which will unmask in the rudest, most unfeeling-like manner upon actual experiment, any of these little romantic innovations we may try to intro-

The Larchmont Commuters.

duce into our customary methods of existence.

Just here in this narrative it is apropos to describe briefly a few of the personalities belonging to the members who composed the party of "Larchmont Commuters," who, headed by Andy Muir, had entered into the syndicate formed with the express idea of gaining a rest of mind and body, a change of atmosphere, and social retirement. The compact between the four friends was to extend over a period of one month, each member going to and returning from business daily.

Andy Muir and Fred Tracey occupied bachelor apartments on the "west side," New York, and had ever since they first made each other's acquaintance, one night many years ago, when Fred looked over his nose-glasses while in a café on Park Row and saw opposite to him Andy Muir, mentally itemizing the cost of the choice he

The Larchmont Commuters.

had made from the bill of fare. When their orders had been served, Fred further observed that the selection of the eating-house which had attracted each in the same way, by the sign "Surpassing Coffee, 5c.", was a key to their present situation, that neither at that moment was enjoying the glory nor the affluence which would be attached to the office of the president of a trust company, a street railway, or of the board of the city aldermen.

The bond of sympathy and admiration for each other which sprang up between Andy and Fred over that cup of "surpassing coffee" was only surpassed in interest to their acquaintances by the radical differences in the tastes and temperaments of the two friends. Both strangers in a large city, and wholly dependent upon their own efforts for success, they drifted into the channels of business unconsciously pointed out to them by the natural bent of their

The Larchmont Commuters.

inclinations. Andy, the practical, the methodical, the forbearing, and Fred, the artistic, the accomplished, and erratic.

Years of hard work and close application to business had brought the boys success, by which they were allowed to indulge their tastes, and consequently the comforts and luxuries of home, which were denied to them in those earlier days when over that cup of "Surpassing Coffee, 5c." they had first met.

Berry Harper,—well, Berry just seemed to happen along, till one day he informed his mother that there were two requests he wished to make of her. One was that he be put into a pair of long trousers, the other, that he should be allowed to write Jr. after his name. This accomplished, he next informed his father that playing fashion-plate gentleman around the parlor and corridors of the fashionable hotel at which his family lived, wouldn't go any longer at

The Larchmont Commuters.

the price. He would consider a proposition, however, to enter his father's business down town, on a partnership basis, and do his best to help him get away with the profits.

A few years at business had brought Berry into contact with men much older than he, and being possessed of an assimilative nature, he easily acquired the mode of expression and mannerisms of men years older in experience and age. Coupled with the air of assuming dignity, Berry could no less easily, and perhaps more naturally, play the rôle of precocious youth. Bright, original and humorous, active, magnetic and irrepressible, are words which will give the reader but a slight impression of the make-up of nineteen-year old Berry, whom the three other commuters called "The Kid."

But one other member of the party remains for discussion. Sidney Graham had



The Larchmont Commuters.

resigned for the Summer months the apartments which he had occupied for several years in one of New York's boasted hostellries which commands the Fifth Avenue entrance to Central Park, and was, from the conception of the scheme, to spend a month in the country, an ardent supporter of the venture. Graham liked the country, he was fond of the companionship of his friends, and above all was anxious for new scenes, opportunities for adventure, anything, in fact, which would divert his mind from the harrowing details of his business. Sidney Graham said he had worked hard all his life, and thought he should always have to, and for that reason he never let an opportunity pass which would afford congenial amusement and recreation and at the same time not interfere with business claims upon his time. The ludicrous side of things appealed very strongly to him, and new surroundings never failed to produce material which

"Sidney Graham had resigned for the Summer months his apartments."





The Larchmont Commuters.

he could turn to his profit as well as recreation.

Graham's weakness, which took precedence over all his others, was his love for sumptuous apartments in which to live. He wished arrangements so complete that no time should be needlessly lost or consumed upon his own personal necessities. A push-button, with a quick response by a servant, a telesame indicator, by means of which, through simply pressing the indicator upon the name of each viand desired, he could have his meal served in his own apartment in ten minutes' time—these are a few only of the many items that he deemed it very necessary to have. Sidney Graham was not a crank, but he had a few notions which, if you knew him, you would find it easier to overlook than attempt successfully to combat. Serious, charitable, absent-minded, entertaining and agreeable was Graham.

CHAPTER V.

ANDY CHAPERONES THE DINNER PARTY.

THE ostensible reason for the Sunday excursion to Larchmont was to make a selection of the apartments for the month's stay; but the day thus far had been turned into an outing resembling in description the pranks indulged in by the patrons of the sport while returning from an English Derby.

The guests of the hotel were congregated in groups about the veranda, which extended around three sides of the hotel,

The Larchmont Commuters.

awaiting with ill-concealed impatience the ringing of the dinner-bell. The arrival of the noisy wheelmen who insisted upon making a "grand stand" finish, despite the objections raised by Andy, afforded a little excitement and temporarily diverted the thoughts of the hungry boarders. To this extent only were the regular patrons of the hotel indebted to the newcomers for any favors.

The proprietor, as could easily be discerned from his manner, did not cater particularly to the bicycle patronage. There was no colored porter standing by, swinging upon his arm the large ring of brass checks, to greet the dusty pedallers as they came his way, nor was there the oft-misappropriated but familiar sign, "The Wheelman's Rest," anywhere to be seen on the premises. Andy alone had the honor of an acquaintance with the landlord of the hostelry in which he had chosen to enter-

The Larchmont Commuters.

tain the cycling party. The proprietor, coming upon the scene (accompanied by Andy), led the way to a side entrance in the basement of the hotel, where the barber-shop, billiard-room and café were located. Fred broke the silence of those following, thusly :

“ Say, Graham, you look mighty hot, but don’t you think it feels frosty around here, just the same ? ”

“ That’s what I have mentally remarked, Fred ; and if you have a brotherly interest in Andy, you should tell him not to walk out in this cool damp air with so little regard for his health.” This remark from Graham confirmed the impression already in the minds of the party, that, if appearances indicated anything, the cycling quartette were not to be entered upon the books as “ star boarders ” at that hotel.

Left to themselves in the wash-room, which was a combination barber-shop as

The Larchmont Commuters.

well, they had an opportunity to comment on the situation unmolested.

“Andy,” queried Fred, “what troubles your fat friend? He has a look of damages against himself.”

Berry said on the side to Graham, “Wait till you see the look on his jags about the time we’re through dinner. We won’t do a ‘t’ing’ to him.”

“Andy,” put in Graham, assuming an earnest manner, “you’d better pay the bill before we go in to that dinner. It may be easier to settle.”

“What’s got into you fellows?” Andy began. “You don’t have to stay here unless you want to. There are plenty of other hotels, but I thought we would fare the best here at this season, and see more people. Don’t have to stay if you don’t want to. We can get out right now. No strings tied to us, you know.”

“Hear the boy,” Fred says to Graham in

The Larchmont Commuters.

an undertone. "Now, just keep him a-going and we will have all the fun we want. No, I guess we'll stay, Andy. It's comfortable here, and besides, they seem so glad to see us, it would be a sin to leave your friends."

"What d'ye say his name is?" asked Berry, as he poured part of the contents of a bottle of hair oil on Andy's head and began a shampooing process.

"Who's name? Whom are you talking about? What's that dog'on stuff you are pouring on me?"

"Only soaking your head, Andy, that's all."

"Well, if you chaps are going to carry on like this at dinner I can see our finish at this hotel for the whole season. I'll wait for you upstairs." Andy was very much in earnest.

Fred returned at that moment from a short exploring trip, bearing a tray of varicolored beauty and freshness.

The Larchmont Commuters.

“Andy, stop and have a little more ‘hair oil’ with me; so good for the head and the growth of ideas, Andy. Now, boys, altogether. Here’s to Andy, and may we all make a hit with his friends,” and the toast was drunk. Andy went upstairs, foolishly leaving the boys below with the supply of effervescent “hair oil” near at hand.

“Say, fellows,” said Berry, as he replaced his collar, which had been reefed twice since morning, “let’s put Andy ‘on de bum’ here at this hotel. We’ve no use for this place, and besides, the collection of ‘would-bes’ I put my lamps on upstairs on the porch won’t trot in our class, no-how. Hey, there, Bill! any more of that blue and green stuff with a cherry in it? Eh? What’s that? Yes, the same kind—hair oil—that’s it. Oh, I say, think of Andy’s reputation when we get through with him!”

The Larchmont Commuters.

Andy, tiring of waiting for "the boys" to come up, went down again into the basement, to discover to his increasing alarm that his juvenile band would surely prove themselves imbeciles if he could not break up the game of "ring-around-a-rosy" that was progressing in the cellar.

"Better get upstairs if you want any dinner," spoke Andy with a falling heart.

"Hurrah for Andy!" shouted the boys. "Let's all go upstairs in a bunch." With that, Berry and Fred shouldered Andy and carried him to the next floor.

As soon as Andy could pull down his vest he cautioned "the boys" to remember that he was known in Larchmont, and not to "queer" him. Mr. Proprietor was awaiting their coming with much concern. He did not display the manly forms of his new guests by parading them down the dining-room as he might have done, but rather he placed them conveniently at the first table



The Larchmont Commuters.

nearest the entrance to the dining-room.

“Why, thurtenly ; why, thurtenly, Andy ; of coorse he do,” says Berry, as his elbow kept continually slipping from the corner of the table where he as often replaced it, wetting the spot each time with the tips of his fingers.

“Please pass the tobasco sauce to Andy. If he doesn’t get a change his face will set like a plaster of Paris cast. Waiter ! Waiter ! Are there no waiters here, Andy ?” Fred was keeping up a series of raps on the empty glasses and pickle jars with his knife, creating a species of music resembling that produced on a zylophone. In the midst of the racket a colored waiter arrived.

“Well, George,” says Graham, “do we look like ready money, or only forty cents ?”

“Mah name ain’t George, sah. I reckon ah kin bring ’bout what you want, though. Mah name am Liza. I reckon I done see



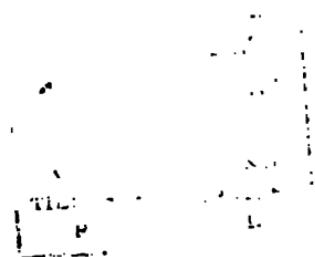
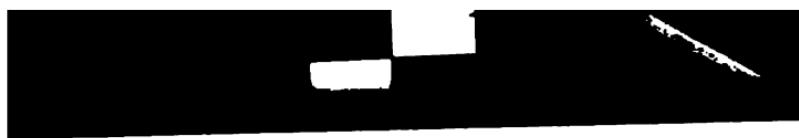
The Larchmont Commuters.

forty cents fo' I begin." Andy gave her the good-will money, while the other three were doing a pantomimic song called "My Ann Elizer." Berry, with a soup spoon, was musical director.

"Now, all together"—(in pantomime):

"My Ann Elizer, she's a surpriser,
A tantalizer. She's in the whirl,
And I'll advertise her, my Ann Elizer,
My 'rag-time' girl."

The song finished, Fred imagined things too quiet, so he beckoned for three of the other waiters and promised each one dollar if they would stand guard at his table and not wait upon any one else. Before the wheelmen had been in the dining-room fifteen minutes the entire company, including guests and waiters, were completely demoralized. The waiters, thinking they had struck a Klondyke, refused to wait upon the other guests.





The Larchmont Commuters.

Meanwhile Berry had borrowed several plates of saltine crackers from the adjoining tables, had shuffled them as playing cards, and was engaged in an imaginary game of solitaire, to the manifest amusement of that end of the dining-room.

Andy sat at the head of the table, a picture of martyred dignity. He held out till after the soup had been served and the performance well started. Some of his acquaintances had passed out of the dining-room, giving him a nod of astonishment more than a bow of pleasant recognition. After witnessing an exhibition of four waiters trying to serve Fred with a meagre supply of celery placed on a small dish, Andy bid adieu to his companions, and, as he went, cautioned those he left behind by saying, "Remember, if you get fired out, you have only yourselves to blame."

"Well, so long, Andy. Just tell them that you saw us, and that we were feeling fine."

The Larchmont Commuters.

This was the chorus that Andy could hear as he left the room. He turned his face with fear set in every line of his features, to have a last look at his irrepressible companions, who he fully expected within the next ten minutes would find themselves adrift in the street.



CHAPTER VI.

AN IMPROMPTU SAIL.

ANDY left the dinner-table with both fear and disappointment pressing heavily upon him,—fear that the antics of his comrades would call down upon themselves the disapproval of the proprietor and the guests of the hotel, and disappointment that his purpose in bringing his friends to Larchmont for a period of “rest and quiet” was, from the present outlook, at least, in danger of being hopelessly diverted.

He paced thoughtfully up and down the



The Larchmont Commuters.

veranda, reasoning with himself whether it were wise still to persist in trying to retain a semblance of his original scheme, or give up before it was too late, when a bright idea came to his rescue. He recalled that the Mitchell House, a highly respectable establishment, was possessed of a set of apartments devoted exclusively to the use of bachelors. These rooms were in an annex detached from the main building in the rear of the hotel proper, and separated only by a short expanse of lawn. The "Annex" was a two-story frail wooden structure. A laundry used by the hotel establishment occupied the first floor, and the rooms above were reached by a narrow, steep stairway, the door to which was shielded from the laundry entrance by a row of evergreens and a green-painted lattice frame-work.

Andy hurriedly acted upon the idea which had come to him, and the developments



The Larchmont Commuters.

thus far bore him out in his impression that the Mitchell House offered better inducements for a successful realization of his "Rest and Quiet" theory than any other place at that resort. Without leaving any information for the reckless diners as to his whereabouts, he hied him across the street to the Mitchell House to make arrangements for stowing the boys away over the laundry.

The diners, finding that the object which had supplied the incentive for their hilarious conduct had deserted them, sobered into a respectful quiet, and finished their dinner in a gentlemanlike manner.

"There must be good sailing hereabouts," observed Graham.

"Why, thurtenly," responded Berry, using one of his favorite expressions, which he articulated in his own inimitable way, by pushing up folds of wrinkles in his pliable nose, and at the same time sending out



The Larchmont Commuters.

his accordion-extension lips. "What do you suppose they do with the ocean?"

The three friends had strolled out after dinner to have a view of the beautiful stretch of water which lay tranquilly spread out before them, bounded on the opposite shore by a hilly, picturesque landscape. They walked carelessly along, chatting over the amusing incidents of the dinner, expecting to discover the missing Andy basking in the sun, snugly hid away on one of the steep-shelving rocks which cover the face of the promontory at that point; but no trace could be found of the missing bicyclist. Lying at an improvised pier close at hand was a small naphtha launch for renting purposes. It was reached, when the tide was in, by clambering down the steep face of a large rock, which had been worn smooth by previous attempts of venturesome applicants to gain the landing. If the tide had betaken itself on a short run



"The beautiful stretch of water which lay tranquilly spread out before them."

1
A
TILDEN DOCUMENTS
ALBERT TILDEN



The Larchmont Commuters.

up the Sound to New York or Boston, then the launch could be reached by the stone stairs without these dangerous gymnastic evolutions.

Fred, catching sight of the bare-headed, portly old lady with a businesslike air who stood upon the floating platform at the little awning-topped craft, called out in his characteristic way: "Hey, madam! Can we have the boat?"

The old lady, scenting business in the air, struck an attitude, pulling down her glasses from their perch on the top of her head, and then, with arms akimbo, she replied in a rasping voice: "Yes, you kin have it long as you want to, providin' you pay a dollar an hour for her. That's what she's here for."

Before she had finished delivering herself of this very significant speech, the three boys had slid down the rock and bounded onto the landing in safety. Fred pro-



The Larchmont Commuters.

ceeded at once to make arrangements.

"Now, madam, it's just this way. You see, there are four of us, and we will have a great many friends. Now, you be real nice about this and we will engage your boat for all Summer: but before we do, of course we must see how she separates the moisture. We must know, of course, too, that she leaves objects behind her when she is travelling in the opposite direction. Now, all these little things we must be assured of before we take this yacht for the Summer. If you can spare time to run us around the bay for an hour, I think we could satisfy ourselves on these requirements.—Don't you think we could satisfy ourselves in an hour, fellows?"

"Why, thurtenly," replied Berry, as he stepped over the rail, taking his seat.

Fred gallantly held out his hand to assist the skipperess into the boat, but to his surprise she declined, explaining that other



"Fred proceeded at once to make arrangements."

ANNUAL
TIDEWATER

20

ANNUAL

21



The Larchmont Commuters.

pressing duties would keep her "on the float." So, with the engineer, who acted as pilot as well, the three adventurers made off with the yacht. After sailing about till the novelty had worn off, and the boat having demonstrated to their entire satisfaction that objects appeared to move, as they wisely observed to each other, at least in the opposite direction, the pilot hove the boat to.

As with a sudden turn it rounded the promontory which had shielded the harbor and the land pier from the view of the excursionists, an apparition appeared unto them which in their wildest hopes they could not have wished to be different. Andy had made his way down to the boat landing and stood talking to the ancient sea-nymph in charge of the pier.

"Forget it! Forget it! Here's Andy," ejaculated Berry. "Call Fred's bluff, Graham, to the 'old girl' and pay up."

The Larchmont Commuters.

Graham handed out the price for the hour's use of the boat to the surprised owner, who had expected to receive in return for the ride promises only, if the yacht had proven herself satisfactory.

"Did the gentlemen seem satisfied with the yacht?" inquired the old lady, with an eye to business.

"Oh, that's all right," put in Fred. "We take this yacht every night from six to nine. Now, remember that's a go. Send the bill each time to our friend here, Mr. Andy Muir. He's the only man in the crowd who can afford to wear a yacht club cap."

"Well, now," began Andy, "if you Indians are ready to talk business, we will go to the Mitchell House and pick out our rooms. I think I have found what we want."

"Forget it! Forget it!" put in Berry. "We furnish the ocean and the boat. Now, you furnish the rooms, Andy, and we'll call it even."



The Larchmont Commuters.

“No more joking, now, boys. You’ve all had your fun. Let’s get down to business,” Andy replied as though he meant it. So they all went together to view the selection of rooms Andy had made.

CHAPTER VII.

CHOOSING THE ROOMS.

ANDY escorted his friends from the boat landing to the offices of the hotel he had chosen in which to quarter his band of incorrigibles. He then presented the genial gentleman who was acting manager of the establishment. The "boys" looked Mr. Mitchell over closely, noted his smile of welcome and his affable manner, and they expressed their opinion that "they guessed he'd do." Andy became encouraged. His plan was progressing favorably. Mr. Mitchell

The Larchmont Commuters.

observed that he favored having young people around the hotel, and he said he would do what he could to make the stay of the gentlemen interesting and pleasant.

“You see, it’s just like this,” put in Andy, confidentially. “We want to be at a place near New York, and we want to be quiet. We wish to get a rest out of this, and that’s why I think the Annex, the rooms over the laundry, would just about suit our purpose, and besides they are reasonable, too.”

“Oh, got to be, got to be reasonable,” interposed Fred. “All the comforts of home, but you will understand, Mr. Mitchell, we don’t wish to buy the Annex.”

“Oh, all right, I understand,” said the knowing hotel man, and he pulled his yachting cap down till the fore peak rested on the gold rims of his spectacles. “Now, come along with me, and I’ll show you what we’ve got out there in the Annex.”

Mr. Mitchell was tall, stoop-shouldered,

The Larchmont Commuters.

and clad always in a color cloth of a pepper and salt mixture, cut into a four-button narrow-tailed coat. He led the advance with Andy, while Berry, Fred and Sidney followed in line, doing the shoulder and hip lock-step walk. Up the narrow flight of stairs by which the apartments were reached, they followed in step, then, after a turn to the left down a narrow passageway into the hall, which extended the full length of the building, the single rooms opening off the hall on either side were reached. Seven rooms in all comprised the sleeping accomodations in the Annex.

"Now, gentlemen," said Mr. Mitchell, as he curiously contemplated the cosmopolitan aggregation of young men before him, "these rooms you may find rather small, but they are well cared for and the beds are new and comfortable."

"Well, Mr. Mitchell," drawled out Andy, quite in earnest, "if the beds are comforta-

"He led the advance with Andy, while Berry, Fred and Sidney followed in line, doing the lock-step walk."



LIBRARY

A. C. LENOX AND
TILTON ZOOLOGY

R



The Larchmont Commuters.

ble, so that we can put in a good night's rest, that's about all that's necessary. Dog on't, I say, if a fellow gets sleep enough, he'll never raise a kick about anything else."

At this stage in the transaction, Graham had slipped away and stretched himself at full length on a single bed in one of the rooms which had two windows in it, a chair and a small stand. Fred and Berry caught the cue and were matching pennies to see who should lay claim to the room directly across the hall from where Graham had staked his claim. Fred won the privilege of selection, and while Andy was still trying to be civil to the landlord, Berry had found the next most desirable room, and immediately began pencilling his name on the white wall over the headboard of his bed. Mr. Mitchell continued to explain to Andy that in the main building the accommodations were much more elaborate

The Larchmont Commuters.

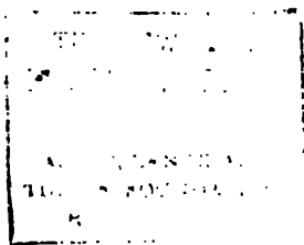
and the conveniences quite modern, and inquired if the gentlemen would care to look at them also.

"Oh, no," piped up Fred from one of the rooms. "We're comfortably fixed, thank you. Perhaps Andy would like to find a room suited to his peculiar tastes, though."

"Well, I'll be darned," ejaculated Andy, as he ran along the hall, poking his head into each room, where he found his friends had preceded him, appropriating the best rooms and holding possession by seating themselves or by lying full length upon the beds. "Oh, no, this won't do, not at all. Couldn't think of it," shouted Andy, making a terrible noise for a little man. "No, siree. That's no way, at all. Can't see it. No, sir."

"Say, Sidney, what's the trouble with 'the boy' out there?" Fred called out for Andy's benefit.

"Say, Andy," put in Berry, as he emerged





"Fred came out of his room with his coat and hat off, talkin' in an apologizing tone."

The Larchmont Commuters.

from his room into the hall, with a well-assumed manner of surprise at such conduct; "don't you know this is Sunday, and the people all around in these cottages can hear all that noise you are making?"

"Oh, shut up," returned Andy, and with a jerk of the head he demanded a fair deal. "We're going to flip coppers for the choice of these rooms, and I get an even chance. See!"

Fred came out of his room with his coat and hat off, talking in an apologizing tone to Mr. Mitchell. He explained, "You really must not mind 'the boy' because sometimes he carries on like this, and I hardly can account for it. If it's in the Summer, it's the heat; and if it's in the Winter, it's the cold, and that's the way it goes."

"Git together, here, now, git together. None of your trying to skin me on the room business. I get an even chance at the best room. That's what I get, see!" said Andy,

The Larchmont Commuters.

laughing, but insisting on his rights. An made a comic picture, his bicycle cap push far back on his head, and in his excitement he had overlooked the presence of the ho keeper, who was enjoying the fun equa with the others. Finally, the choice rooms was made, and the bargain finish with Mr. Mitchell that the rooms over t laundry were engaged for a month, and t boys were to move up from the city t next day.



CHAPTER VIII.

AT HOME—OVER THE LAUNDRY.

MONDAY afternoon, and quite early in the day for a man so busily engaged and occupied by the pressing demands of business as Berry Harper credited himself with being, Berry had taken a train up to Larchmont, so that when Sidney Graham put in an appearance an hour later, he found him standing in the middle of the floor with one foot placed in the open tray of his trunk, which was partially filled with "small wares." He was adjusting before

The Larchmont Commuters.

the mirror a new string tie of gorgeous colorings, which, coupled with the magnificence of his fancy shirt front, would ordinarily have loosened the silverying from the back of any modestly inclined mirror.

"Hello, Sidney, old chap," shouted Berrin in a voice loud enough to be heard over at the Larchmont Yacht Club, a quarter of a mile distant. "How do you like that 'combo,' eh?" (referring to his shirt and tie). "Ain't I a warm member? I intend to have them hear me, certain sure, when I walk into that dining-room; and as for to-morrow night, when I put on the mat to this set, the coons will fall under the table when I 'turn me front on them.'"

"Well, I couldn't dispute your argument, as I look at you now," remarked Graham, as he leaned comfortably against the door-jamb. "But what in thunder are you standing in that tray for? and why can't you get your trunks out of the middle?"



"He found him standing with one foot placed in the open tray of his trunk."

ASTORIA, L. & S.
TILDAHNS F. A.

The Larchmont Commuters.

of the room, and give yourself a chance to turn around?"

"Why, man," roared Berry, "that black leather steamer trunk is a wonderfully fine piece of furniture. Don't you see those foreign labels all over it? By Jove, that trunk is going to stay right there in the middle of the floor, and you fellows ain't a-going to sit on it when you come in here, either." Berry had another large trunk, a telescope and a dress suit case, and each one held a prominent position in the middle of the floor of his room.

Graham strolled farther down the hall to his corner room, where he proceeded to unpack his trunk, which had arrived during the day. After a few minutes' quiet had elapsed, he heard what sounded exactly like galloping horses approaching along a concrete pavement, first in the distance, gradually drawing nearer and nearer. Looking out into the narrow hallway,

The Larchmont Commuters.

which echoed and re-echoed the sounds, he saw Berry leaning far over the bannister, with his heavy-soled shoes imitating the rapid approach of a horse and rider. Closer inspection proved the demonstration to be in honor of the arrival of Andy, who at that moment had reached the hallway.

The noise of the clatter of hoofs grew louder, and was increased by the added voices of Berry and Sidney, who were dancing around in a circle, yelling, "Whoa, Bill! Whoa, there, Andy!" The racket subsiding, Berry and Sidney directed Andy to "hitch up right here, in this stall," and they ushered him into his box-like apartment. "Here, Andy, is where you will say your prayers every night before you get into your little crib."

Graham and Berry had each thrown themselves upon Andy's bed after the most reckless manner. Andy was nonplussed.

The Larchmont Commuters.

"Do you fellows own the whole floor already?" he inquired.

"Why, thurtenly, Andy, why thurtenly. If we don't, we will before morning. Don't we, Graham?" nodded Berry to Sidney.

"Why, of course, we own it, Andy, and the life of any other poor cuss will be cheap if he stays with this collection long."

"Anybody see an express parcel for me?" inquired Andy. "I had a Summer suit pressed at my tailor's in town to-day, and I sent it up here in care of the hotel. Now I want that suit to dress for dinner."

"Well, run over to the hotel and inquire for it, Andy. There's no push-button here that I could find," insinuated Graham.

"No, I'll be darned if I will," ejaculated Andy. "I see a nigger out there cutting grass on the lawn. I'll call to him." Whereupon Andy shouted to the colored porter. Berry joined in, too, and Graham was only deterred from following suit by what he

The Larchmont Commuters.

saw through the end windows of his room. The family in the cottage next door had become alarmed, thinking a fire was in progress over in the laundry, and were craning their necks out of their windows ready to spread an alarm.

Just then Fred appeared, coming down the back stairs leading from the hotel proper, accompanied by two bell-boys who were carrying his bags. The first thing which attracted his attention was the shouting from the windows in the Annex over the laundry.

“Hello, Fred,” came from a voice which sounded like a megaphone call announcing the winners at the races. “I say, Fred, bring over some cracked ice when you come; Andy wants to make up the appetizers for dinner.”

Fred found his way to his quarters, followed by all the other fellows, who came into his room, and together they sat down

The Larchmont Commuters.

upon his bed, pursuing the custom adopted upon the arrival of each member of the party.

“Well, boys, how do you like it as far as you have been?” questioned Fred.

“Don’t mention it, Fred,” answered Berry. “This is a dream.”

“Yes, a Welch rarebit dream,” observed Graham.

A moment later Fred was already in trouble. He had pulled out one of the drawers of the cheap dresser and couldn’t push it back into place again. In his frantic efforts to adjust the crudely made drawer his nose-glasses had fallen to the floor; then he wanted to throw the dresser out of the window. “Say, boy,” (meaning Andy, for Berry and Sidney had returned to their own rooms) “you know your ‘papa’ can’t shave without hot water. I don’t see any hot or cold water taps anywhere about my boudoir.”

The Larchmont Commuters.

"Why don't you try the sink, Fred," Berry called from his room down the hall.

"Why, I'll tell you, Fred," volunteered Sidney. "Call up the laundry, and see what they can do for you down there."

Andy made some apologetic remark about the accommodations, and started over to the hotel proper. Fred began pounding the floor by the stairway with the heel of his shoe, in an attempt to attract the attention of the help engaged in the laundry, to bring him the hot water. In the meantime Andy had gone over to the hotel to inquire for the express parcel, and life in the apartments over the laundry had begun in earnest.



CHAPTER IX.

ONE WEEK AT THE O. T. L. ROOMS.

ANDY MUIR, although still faithful to his project as he had originally conceived it, was working against tremendous odds. In face of the most convincing proofs, thrust before him every minute of the sojourn of the "Commuters" thus far in Larchmont, he could no longer deceive himself. That he had brought together friends whose spirits, when allowed to commune with each other, were not calculated to propagate his coveted theory of "rest and quiet,"

The Larchmont Commuters.

which he had come to Larchmont to realize upon, and which he confidently expected his choice of the apartments over the laundry would facilitate.

Sidney Graham, tractable enough heretofore when Andy had met him at the different clubs and social functions which they both frequented, was here, in the present crude surroundings, associated with convivial spirits, possessed of a total disregard of his bringing up and former record of good behavior. He and Fred Tracey had made the same diagnosis of the ludicrous situation in which they found themselves, and lost no time in allying themselves for purposes of innocent sport against Berry Harper and Andy Muir, whose sleeping rooms adjoined each other farther along the narrow pine-sealed hallway.

The first night was spent by "the boys" quietly enough to suit Andy, who was paying particular attention to the semblance

The Larchmont Commuters.

of respectability he wished to have maintained in the Annex. But the next morning and the next evening, and each succeeding morning and evening, brought forth their budget of happenings. They were of such a nature as to prohibit the report spreading that the Annex was a place in which to cultivate the "blues" or to meditate on the advisability of suiciding.

Up to the second evening Andy had not found his express parcel containing the tardy suit of clothes which his tailor had correctly expressed up to Larchmont. A good and sufficient reason for this was that Fred had taken the parcel from the express office and deposited it for safe keeping in the obstreperous drawer of his dresser. He and Graham had then fixed up a story with the express driver (who was susceptible to a good joke) to tell Andy that the colored porter for a family living in one of the cottages in the park, had called with a note

The Larchmont Commuters.

purporting to come from him, saying to deliver the suit of clothes to bearer, and that the sender of the note was a guest in the family who employed the colored servant.

This story was carefully retailed to Andy by the man in charge at the express office in the railroad station the next day, in the presence of the "Commuters" as they assembled for the early morning train. Andy's perplexed and surprised look was funny to see. "Robbed, by thunder!" he ejaculated. "This dog'on place is too hot for me. Say, Fred, did you lock your door when you left this morning?"

"No," Fred answered, putting on an expression of wonderment.

"Well, I didn't think you did," returned Andy, jerking his head from side to side and strutting with a peppery walk along the platform; "and I'll bet now you won't have even a string tie left in your room when you return to-night."



APR 20 1978

2000

2000



**"Andy walked away from his friends muttering vengeance
on the colored man who had stolen his suit."**



The Larchmont Commuters.

"Well, who cares, boy," says Fred. "You have lost your suit already, yourself. What are you kicking about?"

"Well, I know I have," and Andy walked away from his friends muttering vengeance on the colored man who had stolen his suit.

As soon as Andy was out of hearing distance, Berry turned to his friends and began to work his lips. "Say," said he, "which one of you Indians swiped Andy's suit? Come now, give over. I've had my lamps on both of you. I'm no 'dead one.' Tell Andy where the clothes are, or you don't sleep any to-night." But here the arrival of the local express for New York stopped the discussion of the disappearance of the parcel.

Andy returned to Larchmont that afternoon early, and taking his bicycle, made a careful survey of the lawns of the houses fronting both the main and side streets of the town, looking for a porter who might

The Larchmont Commuters.

be considered a well-dressed colored man; but his search ended in a disappointing failure. When he returned to the "O. T. L." (over the laundry) rooms, Graham had preceded him. He had written on an envelope these words, which he tacked up upon the casing of the doorway leading up to the rooms:

A REWARD.

I will give \$3.29 in money for the return of my suit which has been stolen.—Signed, Andy Muir.

Andy saw the card posted up, and either thinking it a good joke or not wishing to give satisfaction to his tormenters, said nothing about the incident. Fred in the meantime had taken the parcel over to the hotel and given it to the porter, George, with explicit instructions when to bring it over, and present it with the reward card to Andy and claim the money. The porter followed instructions and came on the scene just at the proper moment. Andy,



The Larchmont Commuters.

in an imperceptible flash of time, saw the whole game, and with his characteristic aptness, took the parcel as though he had sent for it.

“Now, George, you have done this very nicely. Fred couldn’t have done it any better himself; so now, to call it square, you jump onto your bicycle and go down to the drug store, outside the corporation limits, and get another bottle of those bitters. I think you must know the kind they are. Now, get right along, and don’t stand there showing me those white teeth, you rascal. We’ll talk about the rest of it when you get back. And just bring the cracked ice, too, at the same time.”

“I say, boy,” says Fred, “what’s in the package? Been getting another suit?”

“Oh, no. This suit is good enough for me. I have only worn it a few times, you know that.”

“Yes, but——”

The Larchmont Commuters.

"No but, at all, Fred. This suit has got to do,—see!" and Andy kept on busying himself about his toilet.

"You have been having a bicycle ride, Andy?" inquired Sidney.

"Oh, forget it, forget it," quoth Berry. "You can't fool Andy for a cent. He knew what you fellows were up to all the time."

Fred turned to Sidney, and said for the benefit of the other two: "Business must have been good to-day. Another bottle of bitters and a lost suit into the bargain. Well, I am not lucky in stocks, and—"

"That's right, George," broke in Andy; "come right in. Don't mind what you see. The same kind, eh? Here's a quarter for you. Now, don't lose it shooting craps, and be sure you tell Peggins (the chef) to save us something good for dinner." "The boys," it might be remarked, already stood in the good graces of the waiters, chef, and



The Larchmont Commuters.

everybody up to the head of the establishment.

"So you think you had a joke on me, eh?" drawled out Andy, as he skillfully prepared the evening appetizer. "Our turn next, eh, Harper?"

"Say, Andy," Berry asked, by way of reply, "that's rather expensive stuff, isn't it, in Larchmont?"

"Well, is it," replied Fred. "One dollar and seventy-five cents each time; besides, you have got to take your turn at washing the dishes after this."

"I have a friend in the wholesale business down town," continued Berry.

"Nail him, Berry, nail him. He is just the man we want," spoke up Fred, as he winked to Andy and Sidney. "You can't imagine what a saving that would be. Now, we will go over to dinner, and right after dinner I will figure out for you the amount of money we will save by dealing

The Larchmont Commuters.

wholesale." So they agreed to go to dinner and figure afterward.

Andy was principally occupied with his own thoughts, and after dinner he announced that he had to ride over to see a "man" at Mount Vernon, the importance of which statement Fred and Sidney appreciated later in the night. The dinner over, Andy made his escape upon his bicycle for Mount Vernon.

"The 'boy' must have a girl over in that town that he hasn't told his 'papa' about," said Fred. "I'll sit up till he returns and make the little rascal tell me all about it. I have had to confess to him quite recently myself.—Well, now," turning to Berry, "all joking aside, we must make use of that friend of yours in the wholesale business. You see, it's this way. We must be practical and talk business. It isn't right to ask Andy to do all the work; besides, he has used up already his entire pri-

The Larchmont Commuters.

vate stock, and has said nothing about it. We must stand the expense of these extras equally among us, and there, you see, is where your friend, the wholesaler, will come in handy."

"Well, I'm in it," spoke up Berry with enthusiasm. "I'm willing to stand my share of the expense, no matter what it is."

"That's right," added Graham. "There is not a 'quitter' in our crowd. The question now is, how much do we need, and then, who orders it and attends to getting it to the O. T. L. rooms."

"Well, I have been figuring it out with Andy," went on Fred in a serious vein, kicking Sidney's foot under his chair, to back him up, "and we decided that at the present rate of consumption, and allowing for friends that we all expect to have visit us, we will actually require somewhere between a barrel and a half barrel of 'stuff.'"

Berry gave a quick sidelong glance at the
201

The Larchmont Commuters.

two conspirators, but noting the serious look upon their faces, concluded (to use his own vernacular) that he was "up against a pretty strong game," and he being the youngest, of course it would be poor taste to question what seemed to him an unreasonable quantity, and one which would entail for him the expenditure of an almost impossible sum of money in excess of his weekly salary and allowance.

"Well, now," continued Fred, "you had better consult this friend of yours to-morrow, then after you order the half barrel—I think we had better make it a half barrel first, don't you, Sidney?"

"Yes."

"Well, I think so, too. If we need another half barrel we can always get it. After you order it, Berry, then we will 'flip up' to see who gets it up into the O. T. L. rooms, without the knowledge of the hotel proprietors, of course, or else the jig will be up."



CHAPTER X.

RIGHT AFTER DINNER.

FRED had informed Sidney and Berry that when Andy betook himself to his bicycle and hied him away to Mamaroneck or to Mount Vernon, and extended no invitation to the rest of the party to accompany him, it was one of his idiosyncracies; and also that when he announced that he was going to take a "little ride" on his bicycle and made no further explanation, they were to ask no questions. Upon these rides, Fred had informed the boys, Andy would have

The Larchmont Commuters.

a talk with himself, and reason the pros and cons for or against a certain security, why it should rise or fall on the stock market during the following week,—then, when he had convinced himself of the correctness of his deductions, he would return on his "bike," acting as chipper and happy as a red squirrel in nutting time. Next day he either bought or sold on the exchange, according as the case might be.

Upon this particular night, though, Andy had said that he was going over to Mount Vernon on his bicycle to see "a man," which later developments proved to be very true. "The man" whom he saw sold fireworks and firecrackers, and Andy purchased a choice few of his largest-sized "cannon" crackers. Then, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, he pedalled himself home again.

On the way back to Larchmont he had ample time for reflection. First he thought

The Larchmont Commuters.

over the loss and discovery of his suit of clothes. Then he began to consult with himself and to face candidly the theory of "rest and quiet," which, from present indications, seemed impracticable in the O. T. L. rooms. Before Andy returned to his friends that night, he had given up in despair his cherished hobby,—that of making the month's stay in Larchmont one of quiet and retirement.

"They *will* have fun," said he to himself, "and the deuce can't stop them. My original plan is impracticable, and doomed to failure for a certainty. The life in the Annex cannot survive much longer; so, why not help end it as quickly as possible. It's a go. I will, and to-night I begin. I will let Berry Harper 'in' on my programme for to-night's performance, and we will blow Sidney and Fred clear out of the windows."

Thus Andy soliloquized as he wheeled toward home along the quiet, narrow path

The Larchmont Commuters.

at the roadside, now and then passing or meeting other wheelmen, whose headlights came gliding swiftly toward him from out of the darkness, like great sparks of fire at night as they shoot out from the pitchy dark mouths of huge smokestacks amidst a dense volume of rolling black smoke. Silently they come towards you, then as quickly they are gone. Their approach is unannounced save for their flashing light. Carefully we dodge as they pass, and are surprised when we discover that the phantom rider has been equally watchful, and that the space between is very safe indeed.

Andy wheeled into the grounds from the rear of the hotel, and after safely depositing his ammunition in the closet of his room, he returned to the hotel veranda, where he found his comrades "yarning" to each other in the most approved smoking-room style.

"Hello, there's Andy," with a rising inflection.

The Larchmont Commuters.

tion on the "Andy." "Anything doing in Mount Vernon? I know some ladies there, myself, and they are queens, too," says Berry. "Come, 'boy!' Come right over here and speak to your 'papa!' Now, what's the loidy's name?" began Fred. "Come, now, tell us all about it. We can't have any secrets in this crowd; and, besides, you are the chaperone, Andy."

"Well, I'm chaperone no more, see!" spoke up Andy, "and I'm going to kick just as high as any of you fellows after this. Oh, I'll keep you busy now. I don't require any more sleep than the rest of you. Now, we'll see who can get 'fired' first from over the laundry."

The three boys looked in wonderment at Andy. "Too bad, too bad!" wailed Fred. "Gone to the bad, and right in his prime, too." The boys kept this up, bantering each other until bed-time, when they adjourned in a body to the O. T. L. rooms.

The Larchmont Commuters.

Fred wished to smoke his "late-at-night" cigar, so he invited Sidney to accompany him to the Summer House on the bluffs.

"Fred, what troubles Andy?" questioned Graham, as soon as they had seated themselves.

"Well, to tell the truth," replied Fred, "I guess, the same thing that does you and me,—he's sick of the room scheme."

"Well, let's quit the laundry," said Graham, "there are other hotels. We are not cut out for that kind of accommodations."

"I should say not," answered Fred, with feeling. "Why, I haven't had a fresh-water bath in four days, and as for shaving,—well, I have given that up altogether. I am ready to quit the place any time you give the word. Andy won't need much persuading, either, I'm thinking." Then they discussed the different hotels they had seen, and decided to speak to the others in the morning at breakfast.



CHAPTER XI.

LATE IN THE NIGHT.

It was nearly one o'clock in the morning when Sidney and Fred cautiously climbed the narrow flight of stairs to their rooms in the Annex over the laundry. They crept along the hallway to the doors of their rooms, careful not to disturb their (as they imagined) sleeping comrades. They bid each other a whispered good night, and soon were lost to all trouble and care.

Their happiness, however, was destined to be cut short. Berry and Andy had made

The Larchmont Commuters.

good use of the opportunity which had been given them by the absence of the other two boys. Berry was somewhat of a "natural born" mechanic, and also being endowed with a liberal share of ingenuity, he had devised a plot, which in the main differed from the historical Guy Fawke's only in this—that Berry's deep-dyed scheme was successfully carried out.

He removed several batteries from an electrical talking-machine, which he carried about with him for use in private theatricals and entertainments (at which he was always a much-sought-after attraction), and then taking a coil of insulated wire, he ran it along the hallway into Fred's room, under the bed, behind the trunks, and, in fact, all about the room, but carefully concealed from view; then across the narrow hall into Sidney Graham's room. The same course was followed there with the insulated wire; then it was returned to

The Larchmont Commuters.

Berry's own room and connected, making the circuit complete.

In certain places where the wire passed under or behind an interesting point of vantage, Andy had scraped away the insulation from the wire, and had there tied securely by the fuse, one of his cannon-sized firecrackers, to the number of six in each room. Of the success of the lighting of the fuses by the electrical current, when turned on from the improvised switchboard which Berry had arranged in his room, they had been assured by experiments they had made during the time Fred and Sidney were romancing out upon the rocks in the hours of midnight.

When the conspirators had allowed a safe limit of time for an ordinary tired mortal with an easy conscience to have passed in his checks to the god Morpheus, they, at a given signal agreed upon between them, closed the switch which sent

The Larchmont Commuters.

the electrical current on its mission of mischief. Bang! Bang! with a terrible roar and re-echoing of sharp reports from bursting high explosives, came in quick succession.

Dazed, paralyzed with fear, and almost choked with the disagreeable smoke and odor of the combustibles used, Fred and Sidney tumbled headlong upon each other into the hallway.

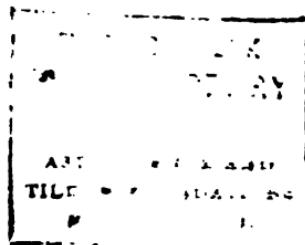
"Great Jehoshaphat! Sidney, are you hurt?" exclaimed Fred, all out of breath and shaking with fear and excitement.

"No, I guess not," answered Graham, in a dazed sort of manner. "The darned old laundry has blown up, hasn't it? Let's get out of here. It may be on fire," and they made a dash for the stair.

"Hold on, Sidney!" and Fred made a grab for the arm of his friend. "Where's 'the boy' (meaning Andy) and Berry?" Fred was shouting at the top of



"Dazed, paralyzed with fear. * * * Fred and Sidney tumbled headlong upon each other into the hallway."



The Larchmont Commuters.

his voice in a frenzied tone. "Sidney, break down their doors!"

"Each made a plunge against the doors of the boys' rooms, in which they supposed them to be soundly sleeping, totally innocent of any impending danger. The doors were securely locked and braced from the inside, and after the noise created by pounding upon them had subsided and Graham had picked up the heavy strands of wire which lay warped into a serpentine twist along the hallway, he and Fred looked at each other, then they put their ears down to the keyhole. Their suspicions were positively confirmed. Andy could plainly be heard on the inside chuckling in great glee and satisfaction.

Imagining the state of affairs outside his door, Andy called out through the door-jamb, "Say, you farmers outside there, couldn't I loan you a couple of suits of clothes—the ones which the nigger didn't

The Larchmont Commuters.

steal, you know, when he took that other suit of clothes from me? You remember that instance, don't you, Fred? You'd look better dressed, anyhow. Now, don't you think you would?" he queried, in a coaxing tone.

The boys in the hall kept a judicious silence, then Berry ventured a suggestion. "Cheese it, fellows, Mr. Mitchell is coming." Fred turned out the incandescent light in the hallway and again crept cautiously along the hall. Once more they bid each other good night, and silence reigned again till morning.

CHAPTER XII.

ONE DAY MORE AT THE O. T. L. ROOMS.

A VIGOROUS hammering on the floor down at Berry Harper's end of the hallway announced that the hour for rising had come. "Hello, down there, Laundry. Why, good morning, Sister Kate," came in encouraging tones from Berry, as one of the laundry-maids appeared on the stair. "Hand me up a pitcher of hot water, won't you, please, right away;" and "One for me, too," was shouted in quick succession from each room

The Larchmont Commuters.

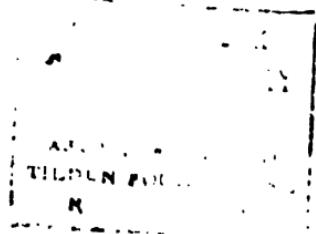
along the hall, indicating that all were awake.

Fred stuck his head into the hall, and catching sight of Berry, let fly a shoe in his direction, accompanied by the remark, "Get in out of there, you Zulu." Berry jumped into his room for safety, then pushed his face around the edge of the door-jamb, and executed a series of grimaces with his flexible features, which spoke volumes in explanation of the doings of the night before, in which he and Andy had played the leading rôles.

Sidney had already gathered up the fragments and tattered wrappings of the explosives used with such a marked degree of success the night just passed, and had thrown them out of the window. The insulated wire he had also coiled and put out of sight, and nothing remained to view of the wrecked appearance which the rooms had so recently presented. It was the plan



"Fred * * * catching sight of Berry, let fly a shoe in his direction."



The Larchmont Commuters.

of Fred and Sidney to ignore entirely the joke put upon them by their companions, but Berry, for one, felt that the success of his invention should be published at large in Larchmont, and, besides, should be truthfully retailed for the benefit of the mutual friends of the "commuters" down in the city.

"Oh-ho-ho! Good morning, boys. This is a surprise," began Andy, addressing Graham and Fred, who had presented themselves in his doorway. "Don't want me to order your breakfasts this morning, I see. You're all dressed, too. Must have had a good night's sleep, eh?" and Andy clapped on his straw hat, then put the finishing touches to his immaculate toilet by standing on one foot while he dusted his other trousers leg, then snapped up the other leg, doing the same, all the while keeping up a lively run of talk.

"Well, going to breakfast, boy?" asked

The Larchmont Commuters.

Fred, as soon as he could find a break in Andy's talk.

"Oh, yes, going to breakfast, sure enough," and then he chuckled.

Sidney had gone along the hallway to the "kid's" room, and there had found the irrepressible Berry struggling before the mirror trying to make a choice of an appropriate tie to match his shirt front of original design (the only one of the kind, I can assure the reader).

"How's that combo, Sidney, old boy?" asked Berry, adopting a tone of assurance akin to pride.

"Very fine, Berry," answered Graham, but then added, "here's Andy. He can diagnose your trouble better than I can."

"How's that,— eh, Andy?" ventured Berry, not quite so positive this time.

"Won't do, 'tall," returned Andy (whose taste on such matters approached very near to the correct), and he strutted into the



The Larchmont Commuters.

room. "Can't you see that the tie is mixed up in a scrimmage with the Quixotic shirt front pattern you are wearing? Take it off, I say. My heavens! I will be insane if I have to see many more of the panoramic creations you and Sidney bring forth every now and then. Here you are," he continued, making a selection from an inexhaustible supply in the dresser.

"Why, thurtenly, Andy. Help yourself. Four for a quarter on Saturdays, but a dollar apiece week-days," was Berry's defense; but he took Andy's choice, and then he begged him to order his breakfast, because he knew the bell in the tower (which started the street-car rolling toward the commuters' train) would ring before he could be half through breakfast. The other three friends went over to their morning meal.

CHAPTER XIII.

SO THEY TALKED IT OVER.

"ANDY," began Fred, earnestly, the morning at breakfast, "Graham a were talking over the undesirability of living apartments last evening, and have about decided to 'move out,' vided, of course, that you and Berry are the same mind. We think your scheme 'Rest and Quiet' an impracticable one rooms, being isolated from the main thing, are entirely without service. Now we have all had our fun on each other, an



The Larchmont Commuters.

are what we might call even-quits. Now, you go ahead, Graham, and say what you have got to say before my story gets cold feet."

"Yes, Andy," continued Graham, "we know it will be rather tough on the hotel people, but we have concluded that you are the one to go and see Miss Mitchell and explain how it is that we don't like living over the laundry, and that we have always been used to having a bath occasionally, or, at least, now and then, a little hot water for a shave, and a bed big enough to be able to turn over in without falling out on the opposite side, and—"

"Falling out, eh? Falling out, did I hear you say, Sidney?" interrupted Andy. "You and Fred must have rolled over several times last night, by the thundering noises I heard down the hall. Well, well, if that's the way you feel about it, you know, boys, we don't *have* to stay any-

The Larchmont Commuters.

where, for that matter. Our week is up to-night. If we pay our bills we can try somewhere else; but, by the way, Sidney just change your mind about Andy telling Miss Mitchell about the moving plan. You and Fred have suggested the moving, now go and tell your little story yourself. None of that for me."

Miss Mitchell, the proprietor of the house, had been extremely kind and indulgent toward the "commuters," and anything they asked for had been granted with pleasure. Now, who was to give the notice that the rooms were to be vacated? "We'll match to see who tells the story. That's what Andy made us do when we took the rooms," and that is the way Berry settled it, and Sidney Graham got the job.

Miss Mitchell occupied a table at the opposite side of the room, and from her position had seen the good-natured prank

The Larchmont Commuters.

played by the "commuters" upon each other at their table. The pleased smiles and approving glances which were easily discernible in the kindly features of the landlady, made the task which had fallen on Graham exceedingly difficult to undertake. Finally, spurred on by his friends, who were awaiting the outcome of the interview around on a secluded end of the veranda, Graham walked with a guilty look into the presence of his landlady.

"Miss Mitchell," began Sidney, "I am sorry that I should be the unlucky one of our party chosen to tell you that we will give up the rooms in the Annex to-day. You have been so kind and indulgent toward us, while we in return have been nothing but trouble and worry to you, that we all feel that we owe you apologies. The accommodations which the Annex afford could not long satisfy us in any event, and we were acting under a Quixotic idea when

The Larchmont Commuters.

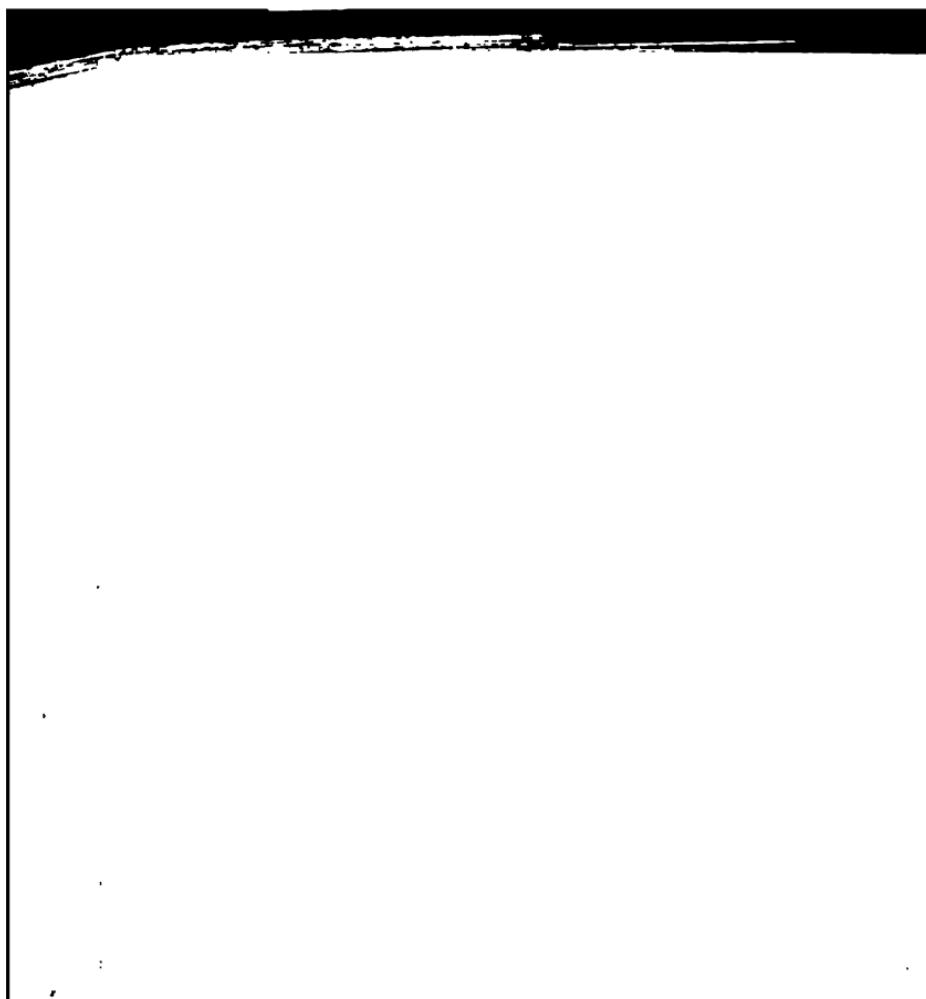
we took them. Andy had a theory which he hoped to carry out, and he acted in good faith when he engaged the apartments for the month, but it was a dangerous kind of explosive he was experimenting with, and when subjected to a certain temperature for a certain time, it exploded and went all to pieces, and that's what happened last night. Perhaps you may have heard it, Miss Mitchell," and Sidney hit his head. "If you can, Miss Mitchell, you would like you to dismiss us with a good feeling; then we shall always speak enthusiastically of your hospitality, and carry away pleasant memories of our stay."

Miss Mitchell had regained her composure after the effects of so sudden an announcement, which so materially changed his plans, and replied that if we had surely decided to leave the rooms, she must accept with regret our going, for, she said, she had begun already to refer to us with a good

The Larchmont Commuters.

ing interest and pride to her acquaintances in the town as "her boys." Here she paused in a thoughtful study. Another season, perhaps, she hoped we might come and occupy rooms in the hotel proper, which would be more suited to our accustomed tastes. Graham then bowed himself out as gracefully as he could, with a lighter heart that the ordeal was past.

Andy accepted the defeat of his original hobby which had prompted him to come to Larchmont, like a "little man," and was the first to propose a residence at the yacht club, where he "allowed" they could probably find accommodations resembling more closely those they had been accustomed to occupy. They had three weeks longer in which to begin life over again, and it is needless to say that they all took to the change quite naturally.



OTHER BOOKS BY A. PAUL GARDINER.

A Drummer's Parlor Stories.

Fully illustrated. 12mo. Bound in two colors cloth, gilt and ink embossed, 75 cents.

"No man sees more life than drummer. * * * This book concerns mostly the light-hearted side of life. The two drummers have a jolly time of it in Arkansas, and how the farmer struggled with an uncut cigar, how the traveler entertained the brood of children, how they helped a bride along, how one passed in an unknown's ticket, and what they do in the moonshine country, make up an interesting group of stories."—*Boston Journal*.

"One of the most attractively gotten up books of the season. The author writes of personal experiences while engaged in the profession as traveling salesman. They are profusely and cleverly illustrated. It is the only book thus far published, under the heading of Drummer's Stories, designed for wholesome and humorous reading in the home."—*New York Life*.

"Mr. Gardiner, who was himself a 'drummer', has carefully chosen stories that may be told in the presence of ladies, but that are just as full of fun and show the cheerful side of life on the road as well as those of a racier character. No doubt many a drummer will purloin from his book and get off those little episodes as his own experiences."—*Publishers' Weekly*.

Paul's Adventures to Date.

Illustrated. 12mo. Bound in two colors cloth, gilt and ink embossed, \$1.00.

"For the boy ambitious to become a traveling salesman, this interesting book ought to be very entertaining. It seems to be an autobiography of a man 'on the road.' * * * It is an odd book * * * the very originality of the work compels one to turn its pages."—*Chicago Record*.

"Between the tasteful and distinctive covers is presented a story that will interest the young boys, the old boys and, in fact, all sorts of boys, who have made, or expect to make, their way in life by their own exertions. * * * The story is far from being trite and homely, and through it all runs the moral that pluck and honesty, coupled with energy, are the surest guarantees of success in life."

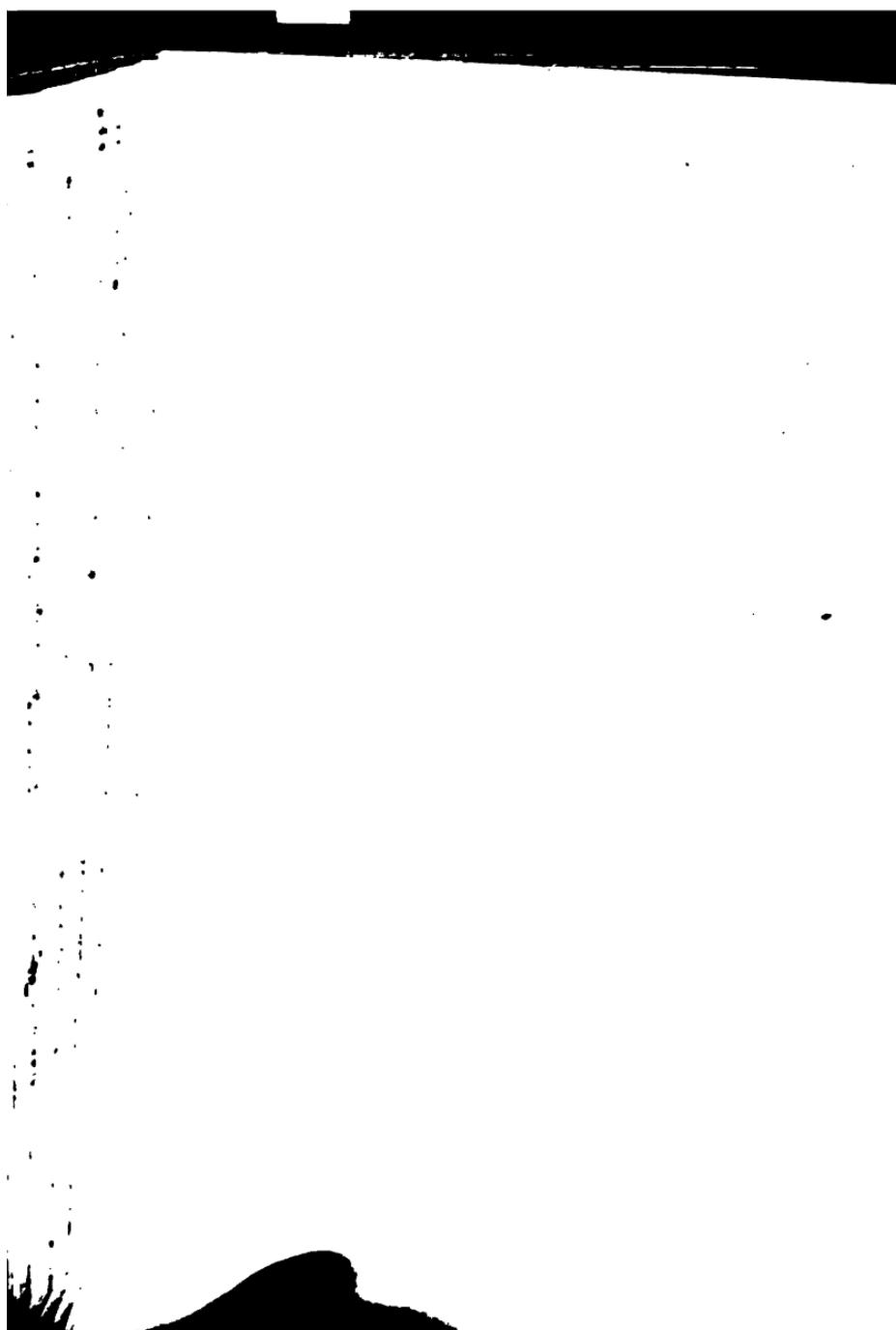
—*The Church Union*.

"It is pleasing to note that among the vast amount of rubbish published for the youth of our land is now and then a book of redeeming features—such as 'Paul's Adventures to Date.' This little volume contains the story of a boy whose ambition, founded upon faith in his own abilities, led him from step to step and from position to position until the end sought for was attained. It shows what energy and faithfulness will accomplish, and points the way to success to anyone who reads it. We know of no little book that possesses greater practical value for boys especially, and for young men and young women generally."—*The Northwest Magazine*.

A. P. GARDINER, 550 PEARL ST., NEW YORK.













MAY 9 1940

